

THE
H I S T O R Y
OF
LADY BARTON.

V O L. I.



THE
HISTORY
OF
LADY BARTON,
A
NOVEL,

IN LETTERS,

BY MRS. GRIFFITH.

IN THREE VOLUMES. *R*

V O L I.

Quibus pretium faceret ipsa fragilitas.

PLIN. de Cryftallo.

LONDON,

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MDCCLXXI,

THE
HISTORICAL
LADY BARTON



IN THREE VOLUMES

VOL. I

By Mrs. Barton

Printed by G. Johnson

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Printed by T. Davies, in R. B. House, Cornhill, and T. Davies, in the Strand.
MILNER

P. L. W.

P R E F A C E.

WORKS of this kind are
in general so captivat-
ing a nature to young readers,
that let them run through but a
few pages of almost any Novel,
and they will feel their affections
or curiosity so interested, either in
the characters or the events, that
it is with difficulty they can be di-
verted to any other study or

A 3

amuse-

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amusement, till they have got to the end of the story.

From the experience then of this species of attraction, such sort of writings may be rendered, by good and ingenious authors, extremely serviceable to morals, and other useful purposes of life—Place the magnet low, and it will degrade our sentiments; hold it high, and it elevates them. Imitation is natural to the human mind; and as we copy those patterns best, which we are most conversant with, it depends upon the choice that
parents.

P R E F A C E. vii

parents and preceptors make of such compositions, to produce the best effect from this general sympathy.—*Tell me your company*, is a just adage ; but *tell me your studies* is as true a maxim.

In the selection of proper pieces to assist toward so pleasing a method of instruction, no inconsiderable part of the attention ought to be paid to the stile and language of the writers ; for it is certain that those who can best express their sentiments, are those who conceive them best ; and the same idea delivered by a gentleman,

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will have double the effect to what it would have if uttered by his valet de chambre.

All authors, therefore, of mean or illiberal education, or stationed below the familiar converse of polite life, should be wholly excluded from the sort of library I am here recommending. Nor should any translations be admitted there, though *done from the originals by the best hands*, according to the phrase of their title pages---For there is a stiffness in the stile of all the publications of this kind I have
ever

P R E F A C E. ix

ever met with, that constrains the ease and freedom of our language, and impures it with a number of Gallicisms, Italianisms, &c. which even those who are allowed to be *the best hands*, that have ever condescended to so servile an office, find it impossible to avoid. A work, framed from one's own ideas, is like learning to write from *a copy*, a translation is like *tracing* the letters after the master has *penciled* them for us.

If I have had any success in this, or my former work of the same kind,

x P R E F A C E.

kind*; it is owing more to accident than genius, and may therefore be deemed rather fortunate than meritorious. I have had a good deal of acquaintance with the world, and have known many private memoirs, and particular circumstances in life, which has afforded me an opportunity of supplying both my characters and situations from the living drama, instead of borrowing them from the mimic scene. I felt, as I wrote, *and lived along the line*, from the sympathy of friendship, or the tender-

* The Delicate Distress.

P R E F A C E. xi

ness of compassion. This is contagious---I hope my readers may catch the infection also.

For I shall think myself extremely happy, if I can, in any degree, contribute towards forming, or informing, the young and innocent; the task of reforming I leave to greater geniuses, and abler pens. The characters which present themselves in this work, are, as I have already hinted, mostly drawn from real life, they are therefore natural, and proper objects, either for imitation or avoidance,

xii P R E F A C E.

“Virtuous, and vicious, every man must be;
“Few in th’ extreme, but all in the degree.”

But, when writers exceed the bounds of probability, and describe an angel, or a devil, in human form, our reason is shocked, and revolts at the idea of a character so much above, or below, our nature; the semblance of truth vanishes, the reader’s attention becomes relaxed, and both the events, and the moral, if there should be any,

“Fade like the baseless fabric of a vision,
“Nor leave a wreck behind!”

With such productions our circulating libraries, those *shop-shops*
in

P R E F A C E. xiii

in literature, abound, and with them must they still be filled, till our legislature shall think proper to enable the booksellers to pay for better works, by passing an act to secure their property, in the copies they purchase: till that is done, no person in the trade can afford to pay a large sum for any manuscript, be the merit of it what it will; and of course no authors, except the very poor ones, indeed, both in the literal and metaphorical sense of the word, or the rich, who form but a small squadron in the host of writers, will

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will devote their time and labour to the public, without hope of some adequate reward.

Those who amongst our legions, neither want, nor abound, have therefore but one way of contributing their mite to the Parnassian treasury; that of publishing by subscription, which in my estimation is at once both flattering, and humiliating, as it proves the attachment of our friends, while it lays us under the painful necessity of taxing their regard.

Happy

P R E F A C E. xv

Happy and honoured as I have been by the favour of the public in general, as well as by the kind partiality of my particular friends, I shall ever be both proud and pleased to offer my present and future efforts to their indulgent candor, upon any terms, and to subscribe myself their

much obliged,

most grateful,

and obedient servant,

E. G.

F R E E A C E

I have been honored as I have been by the favor of the public in general as well as by the kindness of my particular friends. I shall ever be most grateful and pleased to offer my present and future efforts to their intelligent conduct upon any terms, and to do justice to their

most obliged,
most grateful,
and obedient servant,

E. G.

ERRATA. VOL. I.

Preface. Page xii. line last but 2, *for* wreck, *r.* rack.
 Novel. P. 5. l. 6. *r.* *grand*. P. 75. l. 11. dele last *and*. P.
 78. 2d. par. continue the quotation marks to the end. P.
 79. L. 6. after *is*, *r.* *in*. and l. 9. dele *in*. P. 102. l. 3. dele
 the 3d. com. P. 113. l. 2. dele both the com. P. 117. l. 3. of
 the letter, dele the com. P. 136. l. 3. *r.* *situation*. P. 145. l.
 3. for *it*, *r.* *them*. P. 190. l. last but four, put a com. after 1st.
 word. P. 201. l. last but one, change the semicolon to a com.
 P. 215. l. 5. *r.* *inexperience*. P. 252. l. 9. dele first com.

ERRATA. VOL. II.

P. 40. l. 4. 1st word, *r.* *least*. P. 42. l. 9. dele the
 semicolon, and put it after *take*; and l. last but 2. prefix *I*.
 P. 90. l. last but 3, dele first com. P. 94. l. last but 5, *r.*
immediately. P. 131. l. last but 4, *r.* *may be*. P. 137. l. 1.
 after *likely* add *to*. P. 153. l. 3. *r.* *bid me not*. P. 170. l. 5.
r. *iniquitous*. P. 210. l. 8. after *directly* add *and*; and for *of*,
r. *off*. P. 220. l. 13. dele *bad*. P. 283. l. last but 4, *r.*
as Homer.

ERRATA. VOL. III.

P. 8. l. 10. for *she*, *r.* *be*. P. 53. l. last but 4. *r.* *sorrow*,
 and put a com. P. 91. l. 10. *r.* *follow*. P. 106. l. 13. dele
 first com. and put one after *miseries*, and a semicolon after
more. P. 133. l. 14. before *ceased*, *r.* *having*. P. 142. l.
 last. *r.* *profligate*. P. 151. l. 13. after *which*. *r.* *opportunity*.
 P. 154. l. 2. change the semicolon to a comma. P. 162. l. 3.
 after *live* put a period. P. 187. l. 3. dele the comma. P.
 223. l. 11. after *story*, set an hyphen. P. 239. l. 3. dele
bad. P. 249. l. 5. for *it is*, *r.* *'tis*. P. 253. l. last but 1,
r. *miseries*. P. 273. l. last but 2, *r.* *parti*.

THE
HISTORY
OF
LADY BARTON.
LETTER I.

Lady BARTON to Miss CLEVELAND.

Bangor Ferry.

- “ Remote, unfriended, melancholy, flow,
“ Where mountains rise, and where rude waters flow,
“ Where e’er I go, whatever realms I see,
“ My heart untravelled, fondly turns to thee.
“ Still to my Fanny turns, with ceaseless pain,
“ And drags at each remove, a lengthening chain.”

HOW much am I indebted to the
author of these beautiful lines,
for having expressed my present feelings,
so much better than I could myself.

The address was originally made to a
brother, there can therefore be no im-

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B

propriety

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propriety in applying them to a sister
—and such a one as mine—

You desired me, my Fanny, to write to you from every stage—this is the first moment I have had to myself—one of Sir William's most favourite maxims, is, that women should be treated like state criminals, and utterly debarred the use of pen and ink—he says, that “those who are fond of scribbling, are
“never good for any thing else; that female friendship is a jest; and that we
“only correspond, or converse, with
“our own sex, for the sake of indulging
“ourselves in talking of the other.”

Why, Sir William, why will you discover such illiberal sentiments, to one who has been so lately prevailed upon to

pronounce those awful words, "love, honor, and obey"! The fulfilling the two first articles of this solemn engagement, must depend upon yourself, the latter only, rests on me; and I will most sanctimoniously perform my part of the covenant.

Yes, my sister, I will stifle the rising sigh, and wipe away the wayward tear, that steals involuntarily down my cheek, from the fond recollection of those dear friends, that I have left behind me. Would to nature that the objects necessarily followed their affections, or else retained them with themselves, instead of suffering remembrance, like a tyrant, to pursue the unhappy traveller, adding anxiety to fatigue, and grief to danger.

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Sir William has met with some gentlemen of his acquaintance, here ; he presented them to me, and I could see that he seemed pleased at that sort of approbation which is expressed by looks, at first sight of a person who happens to please us—there would be something flattering in this idea which I should wish to cherish, if I did not fear that his pleasure arose more from vanity, than affection.—Yet why should I think so? Has he not pursued me with unabated ardour, near two years, and triumphed over the repeated refusals of my friends, and self, by the most obstinate perseverance? But might not vanity—be still, thou restless, busy, perturbed spirit! and no longer seek to investigate an humiliating cause for an event which is irrevocably past!

These

LADY BARTON. 5

These gentlemen, then, that I told you of, are to join company with us, for the remainder of our journey and voyage:—there is one of them a Lord something, I forgot his title, who is just returned from making the *grande tour*; his person is elegant; I think him, both in face, and figure, vastly like Colonel Stanford.—I suppose this young nobleman will be the *bon ton* of this winter, in Dublin; it may therefore be of some use to a stranger, as I shall be, to be known to him. I shall not, however, cultivate the present opportunity, as I have left the room, determined not to return, on pretence of a head-ach, in order to tell my dear Fanny what she already knows, that I am her more than sister, her affectionate and faithful friend,

LOUISA BARTON.

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R. S.

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P. S. Love to my brother, and to my dear Mary Granville ; but I charge you not to shew my letters, even to either of them.

L E T T E R II.

Lady BARTON to Miss CLEVELAND.

Holy-head.

WILL you not doubt my veracity, Fanny, when I tell you, that three days spent in this dullest and most disagreeable of villages, have not appeared tedious to me ! There is certainly a wonderful charm in variety of situations—every change produces a new assemblage of ideas ; and actuates the mind with curiosity, comparison, and inquiry.

The

LADY BARTON. 7

The wildness, or even horror, of this place, for we have had a perpetual storm, is so strongly contrasted with the mild scenes of Cleveland Hall, or indeed any other part of England that I have seen, that one would scarce think it possible for a few days journey to transport us into such extremes, of the sublime and beautiful—

I am persuaded that all the inhabitants of Wales must be romantic:—there never was any place appeared so like enchanted ground, and the scenes shift upon you almost as quick as in a pantomime—from the stupendous, bleak, and barren hills of Cambria, you are almost instantly transported into fertile and laughing vallies. — There never was a richer, and more beautiful view, than

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that of the Vale of Cluyd.—I am not at all surpris'd that poetry took its rise in this part of Britain; the ancient Druids could not be at a loss for poetic images—every object they saw must have inspir'd them, and exceeded, both in beauty, and wildness, whatever sportive fancy could have invented, or creative genius drawn forth from the store-house of imagination.

I think that even I seem to be possess'd with a kind of poetic rapture, while I describe these charming scenes; but I will not anticipate the pleasure that I hope you will yourself receive from them, next summer; tho' I already forestall the much higher delight I shall feel, on seeing my dear Fanny at Southfield.

Sir

Sir William has been in great spirits ever since we have been here; and highly pleased at a very trifling mark of my *obedience*:—he proposed riding out, the morning after we came; and though there was a high wind, and a drizzling rain, I made not the least objection to mounting one of the little Welsh pal-freys, and clambering up the hills, at his request—our fellow travellers, Lord Lucan and Colonel Walter, accompanied us.

I have described the former to you—the latter is remarkably handsome, but with a peculiar expression in his countenance, which is not the result of his features, but seems to arise from the predominancy of a particular passion in his mind—in short it is that sort of ex-
B 5
pression,

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pression, which has made you and me dislike so many handsome men.

The Colonel is to be our neighbour in the country; he is now going to Ireland, to take possession of his estate, and a seat in parliament for a borough he never saw—I am no politician, or I should animadvert a little upon this subject. This self-same Colonel has just tapped at my door, to tell me that the wind veers a little, and that Sir William desires I will hold myself in readiness to embark. I *obey!* adieu, my Fanny.

LOUISA BARTON.

P.S. I forgot to tell you, that Lord Lucan was at Paris when we were there, last year—he has made me smile, two or three

LADY BARTON. 11

three times, by his pathetic manner of lamenting his not knowing me then. I tell him that he may date his acquaintance from what æra he pleases, as our living together in an inn has brought on a greater intimacy, in four days, than almost as many years could have effected, in the usual course of meeting at Operas, Routes, &c. But he sighs out a rueful, *O que non!* and the Colonel laughs, to shew his white teeth, and superior understanding—

I come, Sir William! adieu, adieu—

B 6

LET-

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LETTER III.

Lady BARTON to Miss CLEVELAND.

Dublin.

WHAT scenes of distress have I gone thro', since I concluded my last letter to my dear Fanny! We embarked aboard the packet-boat, with what they called a shifting gale, and to do the captain justice, he was unwilling to sail. But Sir William and Colonel Walter were both impatient; and their impetuosity, as it generally does, triumphed over our calmer reason—

We had not been three hours at sea, before there arose so violent a storm, that the captain said it was impossible for the ship to weather it, six hours: he was, however, mistaken, for it continued six
and

and thirty—during which time we had been driven upon the northern coast of Ireland, and it was then to be feared that we should beat to pieces, on the rocks. There was a great number of passengers on board, and their groans and lamentations would have affected me extremely, in any other situation; but the violent and continued sickness which I suffered, rendered me insensible, even to my own danger; nor did I feel the smallest emotion when Lord Lucan, who had seldom left my bedside, caught hold of my hand, with a degree of wildness, and pressing it to his lips, said, “We must perish!—but we shall die, together!”

The Captain had fired guns of distress upon our approaching the shore; and a fishing boat came to our relief, into
which

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which the passengers crowded so fast, that the gentlemen were obliged to draw their swords, to prevent their sinking it. How I got into the boat I know not, but I found myself there, rolled up in Lord Lucan's rocquelaure, and my head supported by Sir William's knee—there were two other ladies in the boat with us, the youngest of whom, a Miss Leicester, seemed to be, if possible, worse than I—but I will not detain you longer in this scene of horror, where we expected to be swallowed up by the waves, that came rolling on us, like moving mountains, every moment, till we reached the shore.—

Behold us then landed upon what may almost be called a desert island, for it is entirely surrounded by an arm
of

of the sea, and uninhabited by every thing but a few goats, and some fishermen, who are almost as wild as they.— It was about four o' clock in the morning, when we arrived at this dismal place, and such a morning, for darkness, rain, and wind, I never saw!

Neither Miss Leister nor I could stand, much less walk, and the gentlemen were obliged to carry us in their arms, by turns, for near two miles—till we arrived at some of the huts, where the hospitable cottagers received us with that sort of surprize, which I imagine we should feel, if an order of higher beings were to descend by miracle to visit us.—But be their kindness never forgot by me! and may their beds of straw, and smoaky rafters, yield them
such

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such soft and balmy sleep, as they afforded to my harrassed frame! and let them never envy those that toss on down.

I did not wake till near ten in the morning, which was then as mild as it had been tempestuous when I retired to rest. Lord Lucan and Miss Leister were seated on a little bank, without-side the door of the cottage where I slept, to prevent any person from disturbing me; as soon as they heard me move, Miss Leister came to offer her assistance, in dressing me—she smiling said that breakfast was prepared for me, in a large drawing-room, and under the finest canopy she had ever seen; then led me by the hand to the bank where she had been sitting—I was surprized to see tea there, which, tho' made in wooden vessels

vessels, appeared to me more delicious, than any that I had ever drank out of the finest Dresden china.—

Lord Lucan told me, that Sir William, the rest of the gentlemen, and Mrs. Layton, who is Miss Leister's aunt, were gone to *reconnoitre la carte du país, de la terre inconnue, ou nous étions*—and that now he had seen me so happily recovered, he wou'd try to join them.—

I found that another boat had arrived from the ship, and that our servants, and a part of our baggage were come—when my poor Benson saw me, she cried for joy; and indeed nothing but the state of insensibility, in which I quitted the vessel, could have made me leave her behind.—

Upon

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Upon enquiring, we were told that there were neither horses or carriages, of any kind, to be had, to convey us out of the island, but that we might cross, in a boat, to a piece of land that lay opposite to one side of it, which, when we reached, was eight miles from any town, or village. As soon as I had changed my cloaths, Miss Leister and I set out to meet, or overtake, our company; to confer about the difficulties of our sad situation.

I will bring you acquainted with Miss Leister, in my next letter; and for the present I will call her Lucy, for I am sure I shall love her, and in that case I hate the formality of Miss —

Suppose us now to have walked about a mile and a half, without discovering
any

any object but the sea, which surrounded us, when, to our great delight, we spied land, tho' still divided from us by a gulph we thought impassable. We stood however on the shore, inventing a thousand impracticable schemes to cross this tremendous Hellespont, but never once thought of the only possible one, tho' we had been told of it. We at last grew weary of indulging our visions, and Lucy, who I find is extremely romantic, said, that, were she in my situation, she could, with the utmost pleasure, think of passing her days on the spot we were thrown on; for that the constant presence of *the* beloved object, must render any place an Eden to her.—I told her, that if we were fated to remain there, that either Lord Lucan, or Colonel Walter, would, I hoped, make this spot
a pa-

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a paradise to her, on her own plan. She wiped away a starting tear, and said that was impossible.—

At that instant a new object roused our attention; we perceived a gentleman, well mounted, and attended by a couple of servants, on the opposite shore; Lucy put up a most fervent ejaculation, that he might have knight-errantry enough to cross the river, and rescue us from our melancholy situation: her prayer was heard—he swam his horse across the flood, and Lucy called him a second Leander! He came up to us with infinite politeness and address, and told us, that the mail which had been put on shore with us, had been forwarded to his father, who was the next justice of peace, and lived about twelve miles from thence;

thence; that by that means he became acquainted with our distress, and had sent his carriage, as far as the roads were passable, with a number of saddle horses, to bring us to his house.

I confess I was charmed with this instance of hospitality, and generosity; I hope I should have been as much pleased with it, had I only heard it related, without having benefited by it.—There is nothing affects my heart so much as benevolent actions; I will flatter myself, that this is owing to a natural sympathy.—We made all the acknowledgments that our joy would permit; and walked, or rather ran, back to our cottage with the stranger; where we met our company, and many more of the passengers, who had come in the second boat from the ship.—

Mr.

Mr. Mathewes's servants were by this time come up to us, and opened two large baskets of provisions, cold meats, wine, tea, &c. Every person seemed surprised and overjoyed, while universal gladness diffused itself through our little colony—Lucy appeared almost frantic with delight—the common occurrences of life appear like enchantment to some minds—but there was an elegant simplicity mingled with her transports, that rendered them extremely pleasing.—

I have now, my dearest Fanny, delivered you from the painful anxiety, you must have suffered from the first part of my letter; my next, I hope, shall transport you to more pleasing scenes. In the mean time rest assured, that thro' every
change

LADY BARTON. 23

change of circumstance, or situation, I shall remain unalterably yours,

L. BARTON.

I long to hear from you: pray tell me, have you heard from the continent; and how, and where Lord Hume now is?

LETTER IV.

Lady BARTON to Miss CLEVELAND.

FOR the present, I will continue my letters journal-wise, as Miss Byron* calls it; but I cannot for my life be circumstantial, and carry you up and down stairs, to the parlour, the drawing-room, the harpsicord, the card-table, &c. &c. &c.

* Sir Charles Grandison.

Suppose

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I Suppose us then to have crossed the so much dreaded arm of the sea, with some difficulty, and less danger; that we have performed our twelve miles journey, thro' rugged roads, and over hills and dales; and are at last safely arrived at Mr. Mathewes's very handsome seat, welcomed by him and his lady, and a very numerous family of sons and daughters, grown up to men and women's estate.

On our entrance we were shewn into a room, where there was a table laid with all kinds of breakfasts, that could be pleasing or necessary to the sick, or healthful appetite, and were informed that there were beds prepared for any of the company, who might require rest after their fatigue. This offer was declined by us all, for the present; but the whole

whole company, which amounted to eighteen ladies and gentlemen, besides servants, accepted Mr. Mathewes's invitation, to spend that day and night at his house, except Colonel Walter, who said he would go on to Newry, the next great town, and send us carriages from thence.—

From the first notion that you could conceive of our generous hosts, you must believe that we were politely and elegantly entertained; but neither your idea, nor my description can do justice to their hospitality; they have given me the most favourable impressions of this country, on my first entering it; but even Sir William, who is partial to his native land, says I am not to expect a whole nation, of such—fools! I think he said

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—heigh, ho! this is my only comment.—

The manners and behaviour of this worthy and amiable family, were expressive of the sincerest pleasure at having had it in their power to relieve our distress—may they or their's never know any! Lucy was in raptures with the young ladies; both she and I flatter ourselves with a prospect of much pleasure, from a future intimacy with Mrs. Mathewes and her daughters.

Next morning, our carriages, a coach and four, and several post-chaises, arrived; and we took a grateful and affectionate leave of our kind hosts. Our journey had nothing remarkable in it, except Colonel Walter's waiting for us, at the
6 first

first stage we came to, which, considering the hurry he affected, when he left us, was rather an overstrained piece of politeness, arising I imagine from a supposition that his company was of some consequence to the party.

And perhaps he is not mistaken—Lucy's aunt, Mrs. Layton, a good, agreeable, and well jointured relict, about six and thirty, seems to admire him much—she speaks Italian badly—he is master of the language, and she is for ever applying to him, to correct her pronounciation—who knows but he may find pleasure in instructing so hopeful a pupil.—

The Colonel is what is called a woman's man: he has lived a good deal

abroad, and has a superficial knowledge of almost every science—his head may be aptly enough compared to the drawer of a lady's writing table, which contains a little of every thing—I have this moment looked into mine, to see if the allusion is just. Its contents are a miniature picture of Sir William, with a slight crack in the enamel, and the catch that fastens the bracelet broken—my house-keeper's accounts—a little billet from Lucy—a French song, that the Colonel gave me—some scented sealing wax—writing paper—message cards—and a pocket book, with scissors, pen-knife, pencil, blank leaves, &c.—I do really think that this farrago of materials, conveys a very expressive image of what I would describe—I hope you will think so too, and henceforward acknowledge the Colonel as an acquaintance.—

I promised, in my last, to give you a sketch of my Lucy, but I find I am not equal to the task; for even in her outward appearance there is a variability, that renders it almost impossible to draw an exact resemblance of her; at some times, you would think that her form and face were designed to personify Vivacity.—

“Dip in the rainbow, trick her off in air.”

At other times, a soft melancholy usurps the place of gaiety; so that, at different æras, she may pass alternately for a *Melpomene*, or a *Thalia**; yet she is agreeable, under both these characters, and I by no means think her temper changeable; but am rather inclined, tho’ sorry to believe, that these transitions are

* The Muses of Tragedy and Comedy.

rather the effect of peculiar circumstances, than natural constitution—

I know she is in love—but I should suppose that to be rather a consistent passion, where the flame is mutual; and I should be tempted almost to despise her, or any other woman in the world, who continued still to love, without sympathy—for true love is a passion of that extraordinary nature, as some author has well expressed it, *that it requires the felicity of two persons, to render one happy*—Without being positively handsome, the men all like her, she has good eyes, hair and teeth; a lively, tho' not a fine complexion; and a form that may justly be stiled elegant, tho' small.—

And now, my dear Fanny, let me speak of, and to, yourself. It is above
a month

a month since I left London; I have been a fortnight in Dublin, and have not received a single line from you, or any of the other dear friends I parted from in Dover-street !—They tell me something about contrary winds—for my own peace, I will believe them, but if I am to remain in this island, much longer, under such suspense, I shall be tempted to sell my jewels, and send the money to Lapland, to purchase, I know not whether it is to be an easterly, or a westerly wind—but it shall be a fair gale to waft your letters to me—for the story of Æolus and Ulysses, you know, is quite an arrant fiction.

Your impatient, but truly affectionate

LOUISA BARTON.

LETTER V.

Miss CLEVELAND to Lady BARTON.

Dover-street.

I Received my dear sister's two letters, from Wales, together, and am pleased to find that you illustrate your own remark on the good effects which change of objects produce upon our minds. I have always thought, that in the separation of two persons, who love each other, the one who is left, is by far the greatest sufferer. The mind, in spite of us, must necessarily, in some degree, accompany, or rather attend upon, the body; and while that is in motion, it feels a kind of rotation also —

“Beaux, banish beaux; and coaches, coaches drive.”

And now I talk of coaches, I have never

set

set my foot in ours, since you left London: I begin to think that this is carrying the idea of locality too far, and will therefore order it to set me down at the play-house, this evening.

Your description of South-Britain has encreased my curiosity, but not my desire of travelling through it—for what can augment my wishes to see you! Your first letter affected me, extremely—Oh! beware of a propensity to unhappiness, my much loved sister! Sir William has a roughness in his manner, which I really believe to be more owing to an illiberal education than a coarse mind—I say *illiberal*, tho' I know he was bred at a college—learning and science may be there acquired, but alas! I fear the professors of universities do not attend

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much to *les petites morales*—There are many men weak enough to imagine that an affectation of contempt for the understandings of women, is proof sufficient of the superiority of their own—but these persons ought never to marry; for we can neither love those we despise, nor those who seem to despise us—But I am far from imagining this to be Sir William's case; I know he both loves and esteems my Louisa, though he be deficient in that sort of galant address, which might better enable him to shew his sentiments—But how few husbands are there, after all, even in what is stiled polite life, who seem to think such an attention necessary? I affirm it to be absolutely so—for they must be sad philosophers, indeed, who mistake the *possession* of a treasure for the *enjoyment* of it: but I will not
for-

forgive your trifling with your own happiness, by seeming to doubt a fact, on which alone it can be founded.

I am glad you have happened to meet with the gentlemen you mention — Agreeable society is always pleasing to a rational mind, but more particularly so when there is any little difficulty, danger or fatigue, to encounter; and notwithstanding your flourishing description of Wales, I cannot help thinking that a journey thro' it must be attended, in some degree, with those slight evils I have mentioned.—

My brother has been remarkably grave, ever since you left us; but I will not flatter you, by imputing his reserve intirely to your absence—his Delia! his beloved Miss Colville! is going to France,

with her ridiculous mother—and ill used as my sensible brother has been, by that absurd widow, I have no doubt but he will be weak enough to follow her daughter there, and leave poor solitary me to pass the winter, *tout seul*, in Dover-street.

I have told him, and I really believe it, that Mrs. Colville has no exception, either to his person, rank, or fortune, tho' she will never consent to his marrying her daughter; but I am persuaded that she would most readily accept of him herself.—Sir George cannot help smiling, when I talk in this strain, tho' he affects to be displeased, at what he calls my folly.

I know you will expect that I should say something of myself.—Alas, Louisa!

my

my history, like poor *Viola's* † is a blank! I have not received a line from Lord Hume, since I saw you! my apprehensions for his health and safety, are however relieved, by a letter his sister had from him, dated at Sienna, a few days ago—

I will believe, for his sake, as well as my own, that he has written to me—a letter may miscarry; I have often heard that the posts upon the continent are not so regular, as ours—I will believe any thing, but—that he has forgotten me—Is this philosophy, or vanity? and is my opinion of his constancy, founded on his merits, or my own? I ask questions without wishing to have them resolved.

† Twelfth Night.

—Adieu,

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—Adieu, my only confidante, my much
loved sister,
adieu,

F. CLEVELAND.

P.S. Sir George's best affections, along
with mine, wait on Sir William, and
our dear Louisa. Mary Granville is at
Bath, with her aunt.

LETTER VI.

Miss CLEVELAND to Lady BARTON.

London.

WHY surely, my dear Louisa, you
intend to publish your travels,
and to push Madame de Scuderi from
the shelf she has so long usurped in a la-
dy's library.—What a sweet romance is
yours! what *hair-breadth 'scapes*! what
amazing perils, by sea and by land! what
imminent danger of passing your life on
a de-

a desolate island, which, by the way, would, I fear, had you remained there, have become a *dissolute* one; for I don't find that you had a parson among ye, and I have doubts whether the colonel and the widow would have waited till another shipwreck might have sent you a Jonas—as to Lucy, and Lord Lucan, to be sure they would have remained in a state of perfect purity; and Sir William and you are already joined in the holy bands of matrimony—So that, upon a fair calculation, I do not think that your community would have been worse than the rest of this habitable globe; for one couple of delinquents, in three, is as little as can be expected, even in the island of saints,* of which you are happily now become an inhabitant; or in the territo-

* Ireland. So stiled by the antients.

ries of his holiness the pope, where all should be perfect.

But a truce with Badinage, and be assured, my dear sister, that I felt for your distresses; and sincerely rejoice at your safe arrival in Dublin. I both love, and admire, tho' not without a little mixture of envy, your generous hosts. What extreme pleasure must they have received, from such a noble exercise of their benevolence and hospitality!

All girls build castles; mine have been always situated on a sea-coast, and in them have I often received shipwrecked princesses, and drowning heroes; I have chafed their temples, and rubbed their hands, for whole hours; and when my great care and humanity have brought them

them back to this world of woes, they have repaid my pains by a faithful recital of their doleful adventures.—I once fell in love with a man I never saw, for the same sentiment.†—I did not then imagine I should ever have so near and dear a connection as my Louisa, involved in the reality of such a dreadful situation; and now may heaven be praised for my loved sister's preservation!

I like your description of the Colonel, much—one knows abundance of *table drawers*, tho' not all as well furnished as yours—but I do not much like the character—smatterers in science are generally triflers in every thing—that same want of stability which prevents their being master of any art, like a shake in

† Triumvirate, chap. xciii.

marble, runs thro' the whole block, and lessens the value of every part.—I should not like such a man, either as a friend, or lover, tho' he may perhaps be an agreeable acquaintance.

I am much more charmed with your Lucy, your little pocket Iris; I hope she always wears changeable silks; and alters them from grave to gay, according to the complexion of the day—I did not mean to rhyme, as you may see by my mode of writing.—I agree with you, that those transitions you mention, may possibly be owing rather to particular circumstances, than a peculiar inconsistency of mind—the latter would render her contemptible, the former entitles her to our tenderness and love. I think, even from the slight account you
have

have given of her, there must be a charming frankness in her manner; which is one of the first qualities I would seek for, in a friend. Life is not long enough; but were I an antediluvian, I should not think it worth while to seek for a heart that is wrapped up in a hundred and fifty envelopes—*Un cœur ferré* would disgust me, tho' the possessor of it had ten thousand amiable qualities.

I think that your misfortunes, with regard to the storm, like most other disasters, have been productive of some good, by bringing you acquainted with Miss Leicester.—But what have you done with Lord Lucan? when the pencil and pallet were in your hands, why lay them by, without giving a sketch of him? I should fancy, from his rueful *O que non!*
that

that there were traits of character sufficient to mark him by;—if so, I desire you will resume your new calling, and let me have a full length of his lordship, by the next post.

Sir George, as I guessed, actually intends to set out for Paris, in a fortnight.—I am strongly tempted to accompany him, Louisa—I should then be on the same continent, nay, perhaps, in the same city, with Lord Hume; for as his route is not absolutely determined, I think it is most likely that he will pass the winter in Paris, as I know it is his favourite city.—But then—may not my delicacy be wounded, by its being said, or even thought, that I pursued him thither? and to what end? if his heart, as I much fear, be already estranged,

will

will my presence recal it? ah, no! to what then should I expose myself? to be slighted by the man I love!—O, never! never! in woods and deserts let me rather dwell, and hide my woes in solitude.—

I now wish I had gone with you to Ireland—and yet I should not chuse to be farther removed from that blessed spot, where ere it be, for at present I know not, that holds my happiness—perhaps my misery! How can you say, Louisa, that love is a consistent passion? alas! you know it not! ten thousand contradictory wishes are born and perish in my mind, in the same moment—and yet there was a time, when you, my sister, used to blame my calmness, and upbraid me with having too much philosophy—

where is that calmness, that philosophy fled to, now! Oh, let me once more woo them to my breast! and be what I then was, your happy, as well as affectionate sister,

F. CLEVELAND.

P. S. You will perceive by this long epistle, that I have received both your letters, from Dublin—I do not, my dear, expect two for one; but the first came last night, when I happened to be out, and the last arrived this morning.—You may also perceive I began my letter with an affected *gayeté de cœur*, and ended it in real sadness.—I had determined not to mention Lord Hume, but my brother's coming into my dressing-room, and telling me of his going to Paris, threw me off my guard—excuse my weakness, my loved, my dear Louisa.

L E T-

LETTER VII.

Lady BARTON to Miss CLEVELAND.

Dublin.

I Ndeed, my dear Fanny, your last letter has hurt me sensibly—I cannot express the tender concern I feel for your sufferings—yet with that frankness we both so much admire, I will confess that I am, on this occasion, conscious of the force of Rochfaucault's selfish maxim, “In the distresses of our best friends, we find something that does not displease us.” Horrid adage! yet how true! when I cannot help rejoicing that I have never felt the passion of Love, in the extreme that you seem to do—I have ever thought that love, like friendship, could only be founded on
the

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the amiable qualities of its object, and that with them it must, because it ought, decay. — How often have you and I laughed at the persevering passion of Miss B—, when we knew that Lord M— despised her?—But the little tyrant has taken ample vengeance upon you—Heaven shield me from his resentment!

I am, however, far from doubting Lord Hume's constancy or love to my sweet Fanny; and my opinion is founded on your charms, rather than his merits—yet grant him to be all you can wish, surely it is a miserable state to have our happiness so totally dependent upon any human being, that our not hearing from them, for a few days or weeks, shall render us totally wretched, and create such a fever in the mind, as you
describe,

describe, and I tremble at! Heavens! what a wretch should I be, were I possessed of this tormenting passion. I am certain Sir William has no more idea of it than of a sixth sense—how would the roughness and asperity of his manners which are now scarce sufferable, then wound me to the heart!

Rejoice with me, my Fanny—at what? not at my want of sensibility, for sure I think not even you have more—and can I be delighted, then, at not having found in Sir William an object to awaken it! O, no! I fear I ought rather to lament than exult, in my present torpid state—but still I have a subject for my tenderness, my much loved, dearest sister! Come to me, then, my Fanny, and I will soothe your sorrow, will listen

to your soft complainings, and share each pang that wounds your gentle heart!

I was alarmed at the first part of your last letter; your treating the distresses I went thro', ludicrously, was not like my Fanny; and when we stray so far out of ourselves, there must be some particular cause, which we would wish to conceal, that occasions our acting or speaking out of character—you were unhappy, and did not wish that I should know it? But let not even that sort of pious fraud be ever practised between us, more.—You may write freely, your letters are sacred; no eye but my own will ever see them. Sir William is satisfied with our correspondence; and says, he is sure we shall both be tired of it, in three months—I will venture to say he is mistaken in us both.—

And so my brother is a stricken deer, also, and is setting off, on a wild-geese chase, after Miss Colville! surely two victims to love, in one family, are quite sufficient, and don Cupid will, I flatter myself, let the third go free—

“Fantastick tyrant of the am’rous heart;

“How hard thy yoke, how cruel is thy dart!

“Those ’scape thy anger, who refuse thy sway;

“And those are punished most, who most obey.”

For heaven’s sake, Fanny, if you have not by this time received a volume of *billet doux* from Lord Hume, get up your spirits, break at once into open rebellion against him, and the little purblind deity; fly to me and try whether an Hibernian swain cannot make you amends for his loss.—I am persuaded that it is possible to shake off an ill placed affection; but I am afraid by saying so, I may offend you; however I shall

let the sentiment pass, since 'tis written, and you are welcome to make as free with it as you please; and perhaps may say, with the philosopher Boyle, “that
 “to undertake the cure of a lover, is
 “perhaps, the next weakness to that of
 “being one.”

I perceive myself falling into the very error which I reprehend in you, that of affecting to treat your distresses lightly; but believe me, my Fanny, that I lay a restraint on myself, in doing so, and feel them not the less.—Chearfulness and dissipation are the only remedies for a wounded mind, and if I can make you smile, even at my folly, my end will be answered.

You will, I dare say, discover that this letter has been written at different

æras—

æras—morning visitors are a pest that rages in all cities; but is, I think, more violent, here, than in any place I ever was in, except Bath.—There is some excuse for this intemperate desire of gadding, there, as the use of the waters forbids all sedentary amusements; and a game of, *Neighbour, I'm come to torment you*, may be conducive to health—but here, without temptation or excuse, the ladies make it a rule to pass their mornings in any one's house but their own; and would almost persuade one that they can neither read, write, work, housewife, or pray.—

Exclusive of this *grand mal*, I like the people and country extremely—there is an air of freedom, cheerfulness and affability that runs thro' all the better

sort of men and women, and inclines you to like them, even at first sight. *Rien qui gene, rien ferré*—we may be allowed to speak of a people in this language, who seem to resemble the French more than any of their nearer neighbours.—The old Irish families stile themselves *Milesians*, from Milesius, a Spaniard, who brought over a colony of his countrymen to people the island.—But I should think, from their manners, as I hinted at before, that they were originally derived rather from the French—I hate all national reflections; but they seem not to have any thing of the Spanish character among them.

The court, which is called the Castle, here, is extremely agreeable, as well as brilliant, both in beauty, and finery—

it

it abounds particularly with the former— I think I never saw so many handsome women together in any place, as I have seen here, on a ball night.—Beauty is not, however, so general in this kingdom as in England: it is chiefly confined to the higher ranks of life; while there I have observed that it was most frequently met with in the middling and lower classes.—

I have run this letter into such an extravagant length, that tho' I am very well inclined to proceed in the picturesque stile, and give you an idea of lord Lucan, *en gros*, which is certainly as much as I can venture to pretend to, at present, I find my paper has circumscribed me within the limits of the smallest miniature; and as my art cannot yet rise to

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the nicer touches requisite to that small scale, I shall begin his portrait on a new sheet, next post: in the mean time, this will barely allow me to assure you that my affection and tenderness are, if possible, encreased by the unhappiness of my ever dear Fanny.

LOUISA BARTON.

Miss Leicester is highly pleased, with the title you have given her; and says she will charge all her poetic swains to celebrate her, henceforward, by the name of *Iris*.

LET-

LETTER VIII.

Miss CLEVELAND to Lady BARTON.

MY dear Louisa's agreeable *melange* gave me infinite pleasure, as I am very certain it is an exact representation of her soft yet lively mind.—I am sorry the gloomy picture I sent of my own, affected you even transiently.—Lovers, my dear, are a strange inconsistent race of mortals; their pains and pleasures so totally dependant upon trifling accidents, and yet so exquisite, that they are scarcely to be considered as rational beings.—You, who are not of the sighing tribe, will be amazed when I tell you, that at the time I received the effusions of your sympathetic tenderness, I had almost forgotten the source

D 5 of

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of my own distress, and could have cried out, with Orestes, "I never was unhappy."—

After this, I think I need not tell you that I had just then received a letter from Lord Hume. He is well, and kind, my sister! but, alas! he talks of spending three years on his tour.—We are both young, 'tis certain; but three years are three centuries, in a lover's calendar—and should he hold his purpose I should fancy myself old as a Sybil, or as Cybele, before that time may elapse.—

Tho' I detest the maxim you have quoted from Rochfoucault, I do not blame you for rejoicing in your own ease and tranquility; but you surely might
do

do so, though I were not in love — and yet, perhaps, the idea of your own felicity would not have struck you so strongly, if you had not then thought me miserable ! They say it is in sickness that health is only valued ; I fear there is a certain perverseness in human nature, that enhances the value of every blessing, from the privation of it—I had conceived an idea, here, but fear I have not sufficiently expressed it ; but what I mean, is that as a friend is a second self, you have had the happy occasion of comparing the good and ill together, without the sad experience of the latter.

You see I am becoming a philosopher again—but alas, Louisa ! my philosophy is literally the sport of chance ; for I confess that the only happiness I am at present

capable of enjoying, is absolutely dependant on winds, tides, post-boys, and a thousand other wayward contingencies!

I very sincerely join with you in wishing, since you have not yet, that you may never feel the passion of love, in an extreme degree; for I am firmly persuaded, that it does not contribute much to the happiness of the female world—and yet, Louisa, I will frankly tell you, that I am extremely grieved at some hints you have dropped, in your letters, which speak a want of affection for Sir William.—It is dangerous to sport with such sentiments; you should not suffer them to dwell even upon your own mind, much less express them to others—we ought not be too strict in analyzing the characters of those we wish to love—
if

if we once come to habituate ourselves to thinking of their faults, it insensibly lessens the person in our esteem, and saps the foundation of our happiness, with our love.—

I am perfectly convinced that you have fallen into this error, from want of reflection, and through what is called *une maniere de parler*; for I will not suppose that my Louisa, tho' persuaded by her friends and solicited most earnestly by Sir William, gave him her hand without feeling in her heart that preference for his person, and esteem for his character, which is the surest basis for a permanent and tender affection.—

I almost condemn myself for the severity of this stricture; but my Louisa's
hap-

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happiness, is of too much consequence to mine, to pass over an error that may destroy it, unnoticed, before she is aware.

We are all wiser for others than ourselves, but let this pretence to sagacity be pardoned by an elder sister, as proceeding from the tenderest affection of her's,

most truly,

F. CLEVELAND.

P. S. Sir George holds his purpose, and sets out, in two days—I shall not accompany him, nor can I at present accept of your kind and soothing invitation; I mean that in the first part of your letter.—I abominate your volatile idea of an Hibernian, or any other swain, as a remedy for hapless love—Adieu, my Louisa, and forgive me the matronly airs I have

I

assumed

assumed in this letter; for I shall think myself extremely happy, if, in the future correspondence of our lives, I do not make you more than amends, by affording you, in your turn, many opportunities of appearing as much wiser than I, as you are in reality.—

LETTER IX.

Lady BARTON to Miss CLEVELAND.

INDEED, my Fanny, I rejoice in your happiness, tho' I cannot help feeling that I am a sufferer by it; for if you had not received a very kind letter from Lord Hume, you would not, in all probability, have had spirits sufficient to have written an unkind one to me.— You are, my dear sister, perfectly acquainted

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quainted with every sentiment of my heart, therefore to repeat what you already know, is needless. But in my own justification I must hold up a portrait to your view, which, from a very short absence, you seem to have forgotten.

By the loss of the best of parents, I became my own mistress, before I was seventeen—my brother, who is three years elder than I, was then returned from the university, and set out almost immediately on his travels. I then looked up to him as the sole stay, both of your youth and mine; and tho' my father's indulgence had rendered us all independent of each other, I firmly resolved never to marry, without the consent and approbation of Sir George.—

Young

Young as you were you may remember that during the time we passed at my aunt Marriot's, in Wiltshire, there were several proposals of marriage made to me; and among the rest Sir William offered me his hand; but as my heart was by no means engaged by any of the persons who honoured me with their addresses, I adhered to my first plan, and referred them all to my brother's decision—as there had been no time fixed for Sir George's return, most of those who called themselves my lovers, withdrew—but Sir William, either more enamoured, or more artful, than the rest, set out immediately for Naples, where my brother then was, and by conciliating his esteem, obtained his consent, which he pretended was all that was wanting to complete his happiness.—

When

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When my brother wrote to us to meet him at Paris, I was transported at the thoughts of seeing him, after a two years absence, but did not once reflect upon his motive for sending for us, nor did I even know that Sir William Barton was to be one of the party.— Sir William's galantry in coming from Paris to meet us at Dover, flattered my vanity, I will confess; the continuance of his assiduities, during our stay in France, confirmed my brother's opinion of his passion for me.—But alas! I was still incapable of making any other return to his attentions, than what mere politeness exacted from me.

How often have my brother, Sir William, and you, seemed to doubt my sincerity, when I have declared I knew not
what

what love was! and, O! how fatal has that inexperience been to my peace, since! Yes, Fanny, your sister is a wretch! and gave away her hand, before she knew she had a heart to transfer.—

Yet this I am convinced of, that had Sir William persevered, perhaps a few months longer, in wishing still to obtain that heart, it might, I doubt not, have been all his own. But can it now bestow itself unsought, and trembling yield to harshness, and unkindness? Impossible! The little rebel owns as yet no lord, and it may break, but it will never bow, beneath a tyrant's frown!

There never was any person's behaviour so altered as Sir William's.—I perceived a visible change in his manners,
before

before we left London ; but it has gone on in a blessed gradation, ever since, and is at length arrived at the *ne plus ultra* of matrimonial disgust.—I shall tell you a short story by way of instancing the uncouthness of my present situation, with regard to him.—Sir William is naturally humane, at least he used to seem so—I was applied to by a wretched family, tenants of his own, who had lost their intire substance by fire—I immediately took ten guineas out of my purse, to pay my charity, when he, with the most supercilious air imaginable, took hold of my hand, bid me put up my money, and not meddle with matters that I did not understand—said I was rather too young for a Lady Bountiful yet ; and that if I went on at that rate, they would fire every cottage on his lands, and he should

should be run into a goal by my generosity. I stood amazed at this harangue—however I obeyed my husband, by putting up the money, but made Benson convey it to the poor sufferers, as from a third person; while they with transports of gratitude, acknowledged their having received twenty pounds from Sir William, tho' forbidden to reveal his bounty to his steward, or any of his family, on pain of his displeasure!

Now, pr'ythee tell me, Fanny, if you do not consider this as an instance of a peculiar sort of perverseness? Why should he wish to restrain me from the virtuous pleasure of bestowing charity? or endeavour to persuade me that he was totally devoid of it himself? Chide me no longer, my sister, for what is much more
my

my misfortune, than my fault—and what a misfortune, at my time of life, to look forward to a length of years that must necessarily pass away,

“ Joyless, loveless, unindeared ! ”

May you be happier far ! dissipation must now be my resource ; 'tis all that I have left—what a slight and worthless counterpoise for domestic felicity !

I will change the subject. We are to spend the Christmas at Southfield—Lord Lucan, Colonel Walter, and my Lucy, are to accompany us—next to yourself, she is the most agreeable companion I could have met with—her mind is as delicate as her form—and I can see that she is frequently hurt at the roughness of Sir William's manners, tho' she

she takes infinite pains to conceal her feelings from me, on such occasions.—I once wished that Colonel Walter would have fallen in love with her, that I might have had the happiness of her living near me in the country, but I am now convinced that they were not formed to make each other happy; and that she would have refused him, had he been an emperor.

She has made me her confidante—she loves, and is beloved, by one of the most charming men in the world; yet the odds are many against their ever being united.—I often tell her I envy her situation; for surely there is something infinitely delightful in suffering for, or with, an amiable person whom we love—it almost equals the happiness of sharing their good fortune!

I am

I am sorry I did not sketch out Lord Lucan's portrait, while I was in the vein; but he is now so much altered, that my former idea of him would bear no resemblance to what he appears at present.—From the extreme of gaiety, he is fallen into a profound gravity, and sometimes appears gloomy and dis-trait—It is impossible to account for this change, as he is much liked and admired by every one who knows him; and I cannot conceive him to be in love, as he is hardly ever absent from our coterie, and I have never observed the least particularity in his behaviour or address to any member of it, tho' there are a number of pretty and agreeable women in our circle.

The Colonel perceives the alteration, as well as I, and seems to hint as if his
faga-

sagacity could discover the cause of it; but I have never given him the least encouragement to reveal his friend's secret, and I almost hate him for affecting to triumph over him.—I have another reason for disliking the Colonel, which I will not at present communicate, even to you—he continues to court Mrs. Layton, but I will not take upon me to say they will be married; tho' I am sure it would make her very miserable to doubt it.

There is an orphan niece of Sir William's, a very lovely girl, at a boarding school here—I have endeavoured to prevail on him, to let her live with us.—She is near fifteen, which, in my mind, renders her present situation extremely improper; and indeed I have a particular dislike to a boarding-school education, for

girls, at any age; as they must necessarily contract from it two qualities that I detest, formality and insincerity.—Harriet Westly has just written to her uncle, to second my request; and he has complied with it, tho' in his ungracious manner, by adding an observation, by way of codicil to his consent, “ That two
 “ women in a house, are two too
 “ many.”—

Perhaps Sir William only meant to be witty, and not ill-natured—a play upon words is apt to dazzle those who cannot play with them—I am glad Colonel Walter was not by, when this ingenious remark was made, as he seems to take a particular pleasure in repeating Sir William's bon mots.—

LADY BARTON. 75

As the scene I am engaged in is not extremely active, my dear Fanny must be contented with letting me fill my paper with such trivial and domestic occurrences, as may arise from day to day; nor must she expect order or connection, in any of my letters--I write at every leisure moment, and am perhaps interrupted ten times in the filling of a page.—You are very differently situated; mistress of your leisure, and yourself, and I cannot forgive your barely mentioning events, in which you know I am extremely interested, as they relate to a brother, and a sister, whom I can never cease to love; and therefore I can readily pardon your reprehending the weakness, the indiscretion—call it any thing but a fault, of your affectionate

LOUISA BARTON.

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P. S.

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P. S. I know not whether I told you before, that Lord Hume and Lord Lucan are intimately acquainted.

L E T T E R X.

Miss CLEVELAND to Lady BARTON.

BELIEVE me, my ever dear Louisa, when I tell you that my heart feels, at this moment, the tenderest sympathy with yours, and most truly resents the unhappiness of your situation. I will chide no more, my sister, but henceforward endeavour to sooth those sorrows, which I cannot cure.—Dissipation, as you say, must be your course: any thing is better than brooding over irremediable evils; yet great are the hazards which a young and beautiful married woman has
to

to run, who enters too deeply into a life of gaiety—the grave part of the world will censure her conduct, as arising from the levity of her mind; and the dissolute will form schemes for the destruction of that innocence, which is the only true foundation and support of cheerfulness, or vivacity.—

Beware of artful men, my dear sister! I cannot help it, I will tell you all my fears; they may be, nay I hope they are, quite vain. But I will confess I do not like your intimacy, either with Lord Lucan, or Colonel Walter—I am persuaded that you have not the least apprehension from your connection with them, but remember, Louisa, “The dangers that we see, are easily prevented;” but those strike surest that come unex-

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“pected,

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“pected, like lightning, which we view,
“and feel at once.”—

I am much pleased that Sir William’s niece is to live with you; there is a something flattering, even to virtue, in having a constant witness to approve our conduct; at least I think we should be more at ease, more self-assured, in any trial, with a companion, than when left alone—“Not
“that I think my sister so to seek; or
“so unprincipled in virtue’s book,” to need a guard, save her own purity.—

I remember poor Sterne used to say, that all the mischief which was done in this great city, was brought about by morning tête-a-têtes—which must be unavoidable, without a female inmate, and she should always be a near relation—On
this

this principle I think you extremely lucky in having Miss Westly for an *eleve*—as her presence will be a perpetual guard against another danger you have to fear, the envenomed tongue of Slander.—

The house is an uproar! what can be the matter! Sir George is returned—I fly to him.—

O Louisa! my heart is in rent in pieces; I have seen my brother almost distracted, his manly face bedewed with flowing tears! Miss Colville is dead! she died at Amiens, of a three days fever—my brother met her hearse at Dover—I fear, Louisa, he will never recover this sad stroke.—Sweet Delia! I may say with the Queen, in Hamlet, —“ I thought thy
E 4 “ bride-

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“ bride-bed to have decked, sweet maid,
“ and not have strewed thy grave ! ”

I cannot write more, my tears blind me—you know that I most truly loved this dear departed saint ! her brutal mother is gone on to Paris : would she and her whole race had perished in her stead ! —My brother’s bell rings, adieu, adieu, my sister.

F. CLEVELAND.

LETTER XI.

Lady BARTON to Miss CLEVELAND.

MY dearest Fanny, your letter has affected me more than I can express ; I am indeed most truly grieved for my brother, for the sweet Delia, and yourself—yet why lament for her, whose
state

state I envy! her life was innocence; her death was early! would mine had been so too.—Young as she was, she yet had tasted sorrow; her mother's cruelty in first accepting Sir George's proposals for her, and then rejecting him without a cause, preyed on her tender heart: she loved him, Fanny! and he deserved her passion—her death has sealed his constancy; her merits, nay her beauties, are graved upon his heart, in their full lustre: they will remain for ever undiminish'd in his memory, and bloom before him from the silent tomb! My dearest brother! how my heart bleeds for thine!

I would write to him, Fanny, but fear to encrease his grief, by mentioning the cause—you will be watchful over his distress, till time's lenient power shall

blunt the arrows of disastrous love, and soften its sharp pangs to gentle melancholy ! why am I not with you, to share this tender office ! alas ! why am I not any where, but where I am !

O, my sister ! “ I could a tale unfold ”
—but I will not add to your present distress, nor take off your attention from that dear brother, to whom it may be useful, to bestow it on one to whom it cannot be of service, but who will ever be with the tenderest affection to Sir George, and you, a faithful

friend and sister.

LOUISA BARTON.

P. S. As soon as my spirits will permit, I shall reply to the first part of your
last

last letter—I will not now, my Fanny, insist on regular answers, as I am sure you will devote every moment of your time, to our dear mourner. But if any extraordinary particular, relative to poor Delia, should come to your knowledge, pray acquaint me with it.

LETTER XII.

Lady BARTON to Miss CLEVELAND.

I Now sit down to thank my dearest Fanny, for the kind caution she gave me, in the first part of her last letter; I will try if possible to forget the melancholy conclusion of it, and reply only to what relates to myself.—I have had Harriet Westley with me, for some days, and find as much comfort in her innocent and chearful society, as my unhap-

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py situation will admit. But, alas! she is incapable of administering either consolation or advice to me; her knowledge of the world is even less than mine; nor would I, for that world, render her wretched, by reposing the distresses of my perturbed mind, in her soft bosom.—O, Fanny! there is neither friend nor confidante for a married woman, who does not find them both in her husband!

I am almost afraid to communicate my thoughts to you; yet why? for they are innocent—but letters may miscarry, a thousand accidents bring them to light, and oft undo the peace of the poor writer—but I have nought to lose, my peace is fled! your apprehensions are but too well founded, I am in the most imminent

minent danger from my acquaintance with Colonel Walter — but, as Isabella says, “ Danger, Claudio ! ’tis here and “ every where our forced companion ; “ the rising and the setting sun beholds “ us environed with it : our whole life’s “ a journey ending in certain ruin.” Would mine were come to the last stage !

I told you before, that Lord Lucan was extremely altered, from gay to grave; and that Colonel Walter affected to know the cause of this sudden transition, and repeatedly offered to acquaint me with it, which I constantly declined, and turned it off with raillery—

I will confess to you that I before suspected what the Colonel meant to inform me of. Women are generally too quick sighted,
in

in these matters, and I by no means wished to have my doubts upon this subject confirmed. I observed that whenever Lord Lucan was present, the Colonel used to strive to sit as near me as possible, and frequently whisper nothing in my ear, then laugh as if he had said something smart and lively: I have often looked grave, and sometimes silly, on these occasions, but could not divine the meaning of this absurd behaviour, till this morning.—

I was at work in my dressing-room, and Harriet reading to me, when Lucy came in—I could visibly discover that something had affected or ruffled her mind, and therefore made a pretence to send Harriet out of the room.—As soon as she was gone, Lucy burst into tears, and

and drew a letter out of her pocket, which she had just received from Colonel Walter; she made a thousand apologies for putting it into my hands, but said she knew not how to act, upon so nice and critical an occasion—the contents were as follow.

TO MISS LEISTER.

Dear Madam,

THE friendship you profess for Lady Barton, of which I can no more doubt the sincerity, than my own to you, inclines me to acquaint her, through such a proper medium, of an affair which I think of some consequence to her, but of which she at present seems wilfully ignorant; though I dare say you, and every other person who knows her, except Sir William, have long seen the ardent passion which Lord Lucan has conceived for her.

Now

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Now really, my dear Lucy, it is a thousand pities that such a fine young man should waste his life in sighs and groans, for a perverse beauty, who will not even deign to own that she perceives his passion. We all know it is impossible that she can love her husband, and in that case, it is highly propable that she should love somebody else, and why not her poor sighing swain?

I have tried every possible means to prevail on Lord Lucan to avow his passion, but the simpleton denies it, even to me, though he must be sensible that I have seen its rise and progress, from the first moment he beheld her, at Bangor Ferry, to this present writing—I have even attempted to make him jealous, by an affected familiarity with Lady Barton,

Barton, though both she, and you know, *que mon cœur est devoïë a madame votre tante*—but all this I'll swear I did in pure good will, in hopes of bringing the lovers to an explanation, which might possibly prevent their going on at the absurd rate they do, at present.—You know, my dear Lucy, that I have a very high opinion of Lady Barton, I therefore could not presume to mention Lord Lucan as a lover for her ladyship, if I were not perfectly convinced that he is as true a Platonic, as she, or even your little romantic self.—

I would not, by any means, have you venture to shew her this letter; but you ladies have a thousand agreeable ways of conveying a secret to each other, especially where you have reason to imagine,
that

that the information will not be displeasing.

I shall have the honour of seeing you, this evening, at Mrs. Layton's ; but pray don't take notice of this letter to her, or to any other person, but the one whom it concerns.—*Adio, mia bella, e buona figliuola.*—

J. WALTER.

I shall never be able to describe what I felt upon reading this detestable scroll ! this outrage to honour, delicacy, friendship, virtue ! But how to act ! it was impossible to think of shewing such a letter to a husband, as the consequences must, in all probability, and ought to have been fatal.—And neither Lucy, nor I, could submit to the meanness of telling a falsehood, by saying she had not shewn me the letter.—

In

In this dilemma, I determined on sending for Colonel Walter, myself, to speak my sentiments to him, upon the occasion; which I did.—He came, and on my asking him what I had ever done to provoke his malice, or how he dared to insult me, by his letter to Miss Leister? he burst into an affected laugh, and said he was sorry to find that English Ladies had no idea of a jest; that he really meant nothing more than a little *badinage*, and to bring about a kind of Platonic galantry, between Lord Lucan and me, which might serve to amuse us in the long evenings we were to pass together at Southfield: but if his raillery had given me a moment's pain, he asked my pardon, and promised never to offend again on the same subject.—

I was

I was, in prudence, obliged to acquiesce with this insincere submission ; but from this hour I know him for mine enemy—O Fanny ! what a situation is mine ! would to heaven I could exchange it, for that of our dear departed Delia—she is at peace, my sister—while I—But let me not distress you farther—tell me, I conjure you, tell me, that my brother's virtue and philosophy have calmed his sorrows, and that he now only feels that sort of tender regret, which arises from the fond idea of a long absent friend.—Tell me something of yourself ; but let that something give me leave to hope, that you are happy, and I shall repine the less at my own wretchedness—My true love waits on Sir George, and you. Adieu, my Fanny.

LOUISA BARTON.

LET-

LETTER XIII.

Miss CLEVELAND to Lady BARTON.

MY dear Louisa, I have received both your letters, and really think no situation can be more difficult than yours; but as you see the precipice before you, I will trust in that good Providence which is the guardian and support of innocence, that he will enable you to avoid it.—I am persuaded I felt as much resentment as yourself, on reading Colonel Walter's letter: I perfectly approve of your not shewing it to Sir William; but I cannot by any means divine what could be the motive for writing it.—

Ever since you mentioned the change in Lord Lucan's behaviour, I have had
some

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some apprehensions of his passion for you, but would not hint them, for fear of giving you uneasiness.—O, my Louisa! how nicely circumspect must your conduct be, if you mean to escape the dangers that surround you! and how much brighter than gold, seven times tried in the furnace, will that conduct appear, when it has passed through more than a trial ordeal, unsullied, and unhurt!—

You have never given me the least reason to apprehend that Sir William is inclinable to jealousy: this is certainly a very fortunate circumstance, in your present situation; but do not suffer yourself to be lulled into a state of security, by his apparent indolence; vigilant and watchful must that woman be, who has so many foes to shield against—the unkindness

kindness of Sir William—the passion and merits of Lord Lucan—the arts and malice of Colonel Walter—but the last and most formidable—shall I venture to speak out?—is your own heart.

You have not yet begun to suspect it. It is therefore the more dangerous enemy. Examine it, my sister; call it to strict account; and if you find one sentiment or wish, that lurks in secret there, unworthy of yourself, banish it, I beseech you: thoughts, even without purposes, are criminal, where our honour is in question. Consider the slightest idea of this kind, as a young serpent; though stingless now, its growth will give it strength and power to wound the breast that nursed and cherished it! crush it, betimes, Louisa; and be at peace for life.

I weep

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I weep faster than I write; my brother's unhappiness, and yours, have sunk my spirits to the lowest ebb: he is still inconsolable.—He has received a most extraordinary letter from brute Colville—I can call her nothing else—she says, “She hopes he has by this time surmounted his grief for her daughter, as it is highly irrational to mourn for one who is so surely happy.—She intreats him to go directly to Paris, as she has something very particular to inform him of, relative to Delia’s last request, which she will not communicate by letter.”

This hint has roused Sir George’s curiosity, or rather awakened the fond desire of fulfilling any wish that Delia might have made; yet he says he could not bear the sight of Mrs. Colville, whom

he

he considers as her daughter's murderer, and the destroyer of his earthly happiness.—

I know not what to think of this affair, but I most earnestly wish that he would go any where—exercise is always of service to an oppressed mind—like the wheels of a machine, it lessens the weight, which rest restores again—however, Sir George shall not go by Amiens, if he goes at all, and that I have any power to persuade him.—

No one can tell where Lord Hume has been, for some time past—the *only* letter I received was dated from Naples, which he said he should quit the next day, and write to me the moment he was determined to fix at any place.—If

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a brother's and sister's unhappiness did not at present take up all my thoughts, and as it were usurp the place of my own sorrow, I could allow it ample scope, Louisa; but I will now restrain it, at least within my own breast, and indulge myself in the more generous sensation of grieving for the distresses of those who are more wretched, and not less dear to me, than myself.

Sir George returns your love, an hundred fold. I have never given him the least hint of your being unhappy, as I knew it would render him still more so. —I do not think that even a brother should interfere, between husband and wife, unless matters were come to such extremities, as I hope they never will between Sir William and you.

I would

I would by all means wish you to make a friend, tho' not a confidante, of the young Harriet; if her heart and understanding be good, her want of knowledge in the ways of the world will not render her a less eligible companion or adviser. There is something extremely striking in the natural sentiments of an untainted mind—they resemble the purity and delicacy of water drank at the fountain, before it has been impregnated with these adventitious flavours, which it acquires in its currency.

I know not why, but I am vastly prejudiced in Harriet's favour—I am apt to think she will lessen your domestic uneasinesses, or at least prevent your brooding over them, in solitude and
 F 2 silence.

silence.—If I ever visit you in Ireland, I shall endeavour to obtain a corner of her little innocent heart: this will be no robbery; for I flatter myself that she will love you the better, the more she loves me.

Miss Granville is returned from Bath, she is at present my only companion—within these two days Sir George has admitted her into his apartment. She has lost all her spirits and vivacity, and is perfectly qualified to perform the part of a mute in a tragedy; for she sighs often, and never speaks: she has not however communicated the cause of her mourning to me; yet I fancy if she were obliged to sing a French song, *Maudit amour*, would be the first that would occur to her.

You

You will easily perceive that my letters, like yours, are written at different intervals; and I hope you will also perceive that my spirits are better than when I began this epistle, tho' nothing particular has happened to enliven them, except my taking an airing with Sir George, and my quondam admirer, Mr. Loyd, in Richmond Park, this morning.

The moral of the tale I sing, as before, is, that air and exercise are the best medicines in the world, both for mind and body.—By the way I hope you both continue and indulge your passion for riding—I hear the outlets about Dublin are delightful; you will be unpardonable if you don't visit them all.

Pray give my love to the little Harriet: you may also offer it to Sir William; for, indeed, I am, very well inclined even to *bestow*, since he will not suffer me to *pay* it to him.

Adieu, adieu, ma tres chere soeur,

F. CLEVELAND.

P. S. Pray enquire of Lord Lucan, if he ever hears from lord Hume?

LET.

LETTER XIV.

Lord HUME to Lord LUCAN.

Naples.

YES, my dear Lucan, I will acknowledge your censure just, in some degree ; and that I think is full as much as can be expected from a person of my lively and volatile disposition—we idle fellows are seldom perverse enough to defend our follies ; or perhaps the same indolence of temper which makes us commit, prevents our justifying them—no matter from what principle our humility arises, I hate searching for remote causes—'tis like seeking for a grain of wheat in a bushel of chaff. I never was a good logician, tho' a very tolerable sophist, for myself at least ; and

while I find the effects of my passion for the lovely Margarita, pleasant, I shall never perplex myself with endeavouring to find out why they are so.

You cannot, my dear Lucan, have an idea of any thing half so charming, or you would not only excuse, but countenance my fondness, by your own admiration.—No, hang it, I should not like that, either—nor would I have you see her, for a thousand guineas, notwithstanding what you say of your being already in love—you know I thought myself the most enamoured swain alive, when I left England, and used to write you the most doleful accounts of my sufferings—you laughed at them, then, I laugh at them, now—*tempora, aut mores, mutantur*—no matter which. I can't help, however,

however, sometimes feeling a little qualm, not of conscience tho', Lucan, for my former mistress—she is handsome, I confess, but Margarita is divine.

When I landed on the continent, I was such a novice in love, as to fancy that I could not bear a six month's absence from Fanny Cleveland; but I had not been six days acquainted with my present object, when I found that I could sacrifice friends, country, nay myself, to her; I had never felt passion before. And “What's life without passion? sweet passion of love.”

I have, I hope, dealt like a man of honour, with Miss Cleveland, by not dissembling with her. I have written but once to her, since I came here; and

then told her I intended to stay abroad, for three years, and had not fixed upon any place of residence; nay even said I should quit Naples directly, merely to prevent her writing to me.

I hope she will understand all this, properly, and that her pride will get the better of whatever regard she might have had for me; and that whenever I return to England, if that should ever happen, I may find her, what I really wish, married intirely to her own satisfaction—for, notwithstanding my infidelity, I think it impossible that I should ever be capable of divesting myself of the warmest interest in her happiness. I have now, my dear Lucan, laid my heart as open before you, as I would, were I a catholic, to my confessor. I expect much more from
you

you, than I should from him, not only absolution and indulgence, but a reciprocal confidence also.—Tell me who, and what, this fair Hibernian is, whose torrid charms have been able to thaw your frozen zone? Is it *une affaire de coeur, ou d'honneur*? is she kind, or cruel? brown, or fair? in short, deal as frankly with me as I have done with you, and we shall then have mutually exchanged the truest test of friendship, with each other.

Yours, most truly,

HUME.

P. S. I purpose spending the winter here, and setting out early, in spring, either to Rome, or Venice, which ever my fair compass points her taper index to, that we may enjoy the carnival together.

LETTER XV.

Lord LUCAN to Lord HUME.

MY dear Hume, your letter has relieved me from a thousand apprehensions, which I suffered on your account—it is written in the true spirit of a heart at ease, which no man ever possessed that was thoroughly in love—and though you call me grave and philosophic, I am much better pleased that your present attachment should be of the frolic, than the serious kind.—Most of our young men of fortune and fashion look upon a foreign mistress as a part of their travelling equipage; and I think *Margaritha* as well qualified to fill up the train of *milord Anglois*, as any other of her sister syrens—of the opera.

I have

I have seen her often, and acknowledge her beauty, though I could gaze on her for ever, without feeling any other effect from her charms, but what might arise in my mind from contemplating her picture—yet I do not think her inanimate; on the contrary, she has great vivacity, both in her looks and manners, but alas! she is totally devoid of sensibility, that first of female charms! her eyes are taught to languish, and every graceful movement of her form has been acquired in the school of art.—Read the thirty-seventh and fiftieth letters of *Ninon de l'Enclos*, to the *marquis de Sevigné*, and they will help you to judge more justly, both of her and yourself; they are cases exactly in point.

She lived with the *marquis de Richelieu*, at *Turin*, when I was there—I
 knew

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knew him intimately; he adored Margarita, and was one of the handsomest and most amiable young men I ever met with—he died of a fever. I pitied Margarita from my soul, and about ten days after his death, went to pay her a visit of condolance, and was informed she had set out for Naples, two days before, with an English gentleman whose name was Williams.

I am much too young to set up for a stoic, or a cynic; I know, nay I feel, all the weakneses and follies of youth; yet I cannot help thinking that an attachment to a worthless woman, is capable of debasing the noblest mind.—Virtue, I fear, is not radical in human nature; its seed must be sown by precept, cherished by example, and cultivated by

LADY BARTON. 111

by habit; but when the object of our affections has a distinct interest rather to extinguish, than inspire it, the general bias of our passions, aided by the natural indolence of dissipation and debauchery, suffer the plant to wither in its bloom, and thus obliterate the truest character of manhood.

On the contrary, let the most vicious man become truly enamoured of a virtuous woman, and he will at least assume the semblance of those virtues he admires in her, and “ Use (as Hamlet says) “ can almost change the stamp of nature, and master even the Devil, or “ throw him out with wonderful potency.

I find myself growing grave prematurely; for there is but one paragraph
in

in your letter, that I meant to answer seriously: you may easily guess—I mean the one where you speak of Miss Cleveland, and seem to acquiesce so intirely in your behaviour towards her—and now that I have entered upon this subject, I am at a loss to know how to treat it properly—I would fain persuade myself you were but in jest; yet surely it is wrong to trifle with the esteem of a friend, by suffering me to suppose that you could possibly behave so unworthily to a woman of merit and honour.

That the gaiety and levity of your temper and your youth might render it possible, nay probable, that you should change your affections, and cease to love a mistress you once admired, I can readily believe—but that you can suffer an amiable

amiable woman, whom you both flattered, and inspired, with a serious passion for you; to be informed of your inconstancy, through so coarse a medium as rudeness and neglect, I will not, nay I cannot suppose. — My friend knows better what he owes to himself, and to the world.

I must be excused from replying to your queries, relative to the object of my passion, except so far as to afford you some faint description of her beauty and merits. Her personal charms are so obvious, that whoever views her does not wait to judge—they strike so suddenly that we feel before we think. The excellencies of her character require some refinement to become sensible of—one must have a nice discernment for natural beauties, and a certain

certain classic taste for the *great simple*.—Her mind is in such a state of *perfect* nature, that she is not to be examined by the rules of common life; for her words, her actions, and her whole manners, borrow a peculiar propriety, from herself alone.—She appears to be a sort of privileged genius, of whom may be said, with Milton,

“That whatso’er she says, or does,
“Seems wisest, virtuousest, discreetest, best.”

In others we may trace the mechanical finger of the nurse, the mother, the tutors, or the priest—In her can be discovered but one only forming hand—even his who made her.

In fine, such beauties, both of mind and person, have inspired your, till now, insensible friend, with the most tender,
ardent,

ardent, and hopeless love, that ever yet possessed a human heart! and in my breast, shall that fond love lie ever buried—I think it will not cease even with my life, but death itself shall never force me to reveal my passion.

Press me no farther on this theme, my friend, nor cast away your useless pity on me; for while I can behold her lovely form, and gaze in silent rapture on her beauty, I am not wretched—nay in those blissful moments, I feel a sort of happiness I would not change for all your joys with Margarita.

You may, very probably, have but an imperfect idea of that kind of passion, which I have described; but do not from thence unphilosophically conclude that
it

it cannot exist in any heart, because you do not feel it in your own. This I know to be a common, but erroneous mode of judging—we are all too apt to search in our own breasts for the motives of other people's actions; and when a want of sympathy of sentiment, prevents our discovering similar principles in ourselves, we are too often tempted to deny their existence in others.

I have particularly warn'd you, my dear Hume, on this subject, because I am certain I could full as easily forgive your doubting my honour, as the unfulfilled purity of my passion.—I most sincerely wish you every pleasure that a life of frolic and gayety can yield, but beware, my dear Hume, of those thorns, that grow spontaneous with the rose.

Write

LADY BARTON. 117

Write to Miss Cleveland, I conjure you; and, when your leisure will permit, bestow a few lines on yours sincerely,

LUCAN.

LETTER XVI.

Lord HUME to Lord LUCAN.

MAY I perish this moment if ever I read such a letter! I shall begin to look upon Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, as a history of serious, and natural events; and not be at all surpris'd, if I should find myself fluttering through the air, in the form of a lapwing, or a butterfly.—Surely your transformation is still more miraculous! what, Lucan! the gay, the lively Lucan! changed into a melancholy, timid, whining, love-sick swain; “and
“ death itself shall never force him to re-
“ veal

“veal his passion!” Why what, in the name of nonsense, must she be, that has inspired it? deaf, and blind, I suppose—for no woman that has ears and eyes, need ever be informed that a man is in love with her—in those cases, they are sharp-sighted as the lynx, and quick-eared as the mole; and I would lay a thousand guineas, that your Dulcinea was thoroughly informed of her conquest before you were even aware of it yourself.—

But why you are so cruelly bent upon not indulging her with a repetition of her triumph, I cannot for my soul conceive—I have formed a million of conjectures, about whom and what she is; and have at length acquiesced in believing her to be the sanctified spouse of some methodist teacher, or presbyterian parson; for
you

you have, according to your own plan, “assumed the semblance of those virtues,” which such a puritan fair one might also pretend to.

And so poor “Margarita is compounded of art, and wants the first of female charms, sensibility.” Beware, my friend, that your idol may not have one vice more, at least, than mine; I mean hypocrisy—the marquis de Richelieu is still remembered and regretted, by Margarita, though she did not absolutely break her heart for his loss, as you may perhaps vainly imagine your dove-like dame, your *saint trembleur*, whom nothing but the spirit can move, would do for you.

In short, you are welcome to make as free with me, as you please; the privileges
of

of friendship permit it; but neither its laws, nor those of chivalry, can pardon an affront or injury offered to the heroine of our romance—Besides, you must be but a bad philosopher, Lucan, if you do not know that there is such a perverseness in human nature, that the abusing a mistress is the surest way of rivetting the lover's chains—

“I'll be revenged, and love her better for it.”

And so you are very angry that I have not written a full and true account of my inconstancy, to Miss Cleveland! why how the devil can any man sit down to tell a woman that he no longer loves her? But 'tis a proper measure; *I owe it to myself, and to the world*—I repeat your words seriously, here, for I think them just.—And now you will forever oblige me, my

dear Lucan, if you will do it for me; for may I die this moment, if I am not so wholly illiterate, in this *noble science of defence*, that I know not even how to set about it.

On my honour I both respect, esteem, and admire Miss Cleveland, more than any woman in the world, however the caprice of my heart may have rendered me capable of an infidelity; and I most devoutly wish, that I had address enough to extricate myself out of this unlucky business, without sacrificing any more of my character than I fear is already forfeited.

I cannot help smiling, when you say, "while I can behold her lovely form," &c. But I must acknowledge this to be

the best, perhaps the only receipt, in the world, for insuring our constancy—I'll frame it into a distich, extempore, for the help of memory—

Your love would you preserve the same,
Still fan, but never feed the flame.

If you were at Rome, instead of Dublin, I should swear that you were turned Virtuoso, and became enamoured of Madame la Venus de Medicis, or some other old fashioned marble beauty—the world's a farce, and it is acted thus—the bad impose on others, the good deceive themselves.

But happiness, the way we chuse it, is sufficient for us all; and as you are so very reasonable in your option, they must be niggards, indeed, who would desire to deprive you of the least portion of it;
therefore,

therefore, that you may long possess *ideas*,
is the complying wish of yours, ever.

HUME.

LETTER XVII.

Lady BARTON to Miss CLEVELAND.

Southfield, January 1.

I Have this moment received my dear Fanny's last letter, though, from the date, I think I should have been in possession of it much sooner; but perhaps Sir William detained it, on purpose to deliver it to me on this day, as knowing it to be the most agreeable new-year's gift he could have presented me with. In return then, my Fanny, accept my thanks and fervent prayer, for your happiness.

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But

But I have something more substantial than wishes, to contribute towards it; for I can with truth inform you, that the little time I have spent here, has passed away much more agreeably, than any that has elapsed, since I left Doverstreet.

To a mind not perfectly at ease, there is something extremely pleasing in the quietness of the country; it is like that artificial repose, which is acquired by opiates, after long watching—like that too, though it neither strengthens, nor nourishes, it allows us time to recover our faculties, which are often as much harrassed by living constantly in the midst of crowds, as our nerves are by an acute disease.

I am

I am very glad to find that Sir William loves the country, and is particularly fond of this place, where nature seems to have exerted her utmost powers to please.—If it is charming now, when stripped of all its ornaments, think what it will be, when summer shall redeck it in its leafy pride, and spread her gorgeous carpet o'er the plains?

I look forward with delight to the happy æra of your arrival here, which I hope will be early in spring; and as the Irish parliament meet but every second winter, I purpose spending the intermediate time of their recess in this sweet retirement, with my Fanny, my Harriet, my books, music, drawing, planning, planting; and perhaps there may be a little interloper, who will, I trust, increase

both our pleasures and employments—my Lucy too will be near, if not with us; for Colonel Walter's house is about five miles from hence, and every thing seems in great forwardness for his marriage with Mrs. Layton?

I begin to *flatter* myself, that he is really in love with the lady he is going to marry; for he talks of her incessantly: yet Lucy has remarked, that he spends more of his time here than at Mr. Usher's, where Mrs. Layton is now upon a visit; though that is two miles nearer to Waltersburgh, (that is the name of his seat) than this.

He is to give a magnificent ball at his house, next week; he asked me last night to dance with him on that occasion; which I refused, as I thought he ought

to shew every mark of attention to his future bride—I shall not, however, dance with any other person ; not so much on his account, as for a reason I have hinted at above.

I fear you will chide me for not having mentioned my present situation to Sir William, as it is natural to suppose it would give him pleasure, and indeed I wish to do so; but there is something so indelicate in his manner of treating this subject, that I have not yet been able to prevail upon myself to speak of it to him.

Lord Lucan has been absent from us some days, on a visit to Sir Arthur Ashford—they are both expected here this evening—I have great pleasure in observ-

ing that Lord Lucan is vastly more chearful, and seemingly at his ease, than he was before we left Dublin—indeed I think we are all so: which serves to illustrate your favourite opinion, as well as the latter part of your last letter, that air, exercise, and change of object, are of infinite use, both to the mind and body.

From my not mentioning my brother, till now, do not conclude that I have for a moment forgotten him, or his griefs; they will live together in my memory, to the last period of my existence.—I cannot conceive why Mrs. Colville should wish to see Sir George, as she must be conscious of having done him an irreparable injury; and sure there is nothing on earth so formidable, as the sight of a person we have wronged.

wronged.—Yet I earnestly wish that he knew his Delia's request, as the obeying it would afford him a very high, though a melancholy pleasure—

“Sad luxury! to vulgar minds unknown.”

I wish too, with you, that he would go abroad.—Do, my Fanny, send him to search for your wanderer, on the continent; and in the mean time do you take sanctuary in this island, which boasts a privilege of being free from all noisome animals—you may therefore at least promise yourself safety, if not delight, amongst us.

I am sorry for the change you mention in Mary Granville; her charming vivacity would, I hoped, have assisted you in keeping up your spirits, under the tre-

ble pressure of my brother's, mine, and your own distresses, which I begin to fear will soon outweigh our's, for I think that even the death of the object of our affections is more supportable than their unkindness.—This hint is meant to arm you; for, I confess, that Lord Hume's silence has made me think he is in the high road of inconstancy; and I do most earnestly wish that you would endeavour to forget him, and be happy.—

I have, my dearest sister, at your request, most seriously examined my heart, and will candidly acquaint you with its real situation—'Tis free from love, and thence is all its danger.—O! why am I debarred the chaste indulgence of a virtuous passion? why must a heart that overflows with tenderness, have all
its

its currents dammed? like a poor river forced from its natural course, am I to blame if it should steal away in useless, nay improper channels?

But hitherto, my sister, all is safe—the man I most esteem, I have no passion for, nor feel a fonder warmth, on mentioning his name, than my dear brother's—this surely is an innocent affection—Had I been his wife!—but you have warned me not even to hazard, much less indulge, such thoughts.

Harriet is vastly happy at your predilection for her, and bids me offer you the second place in her heart—she kindly, and I believe at present truly says, I occupy the first—yours is, I think, likely to be the most permanent station;

as I shall have many rivals to contend for mine, and happy will he be who shall displace me.—

Lucy, who came hither with me, is this day gone to pay her respects to her aunt, at Mr Usher's; we are to meet them at Waltersburgh, next Monday; and she is then to return with me to Southfield, where we have, alas! but a very few days to spend, before we set out for Dublin: I shall truly regret the changing of the scene—but must obey.

Sir William returns his affectionate compliments to my brother, and you, and was kind enough to say he wished you would both come over, and see how we live here—what is still more extraordinary, he seemed both surpris'd and
concerned,

concerned, when I told him of our dear Delia's death ; for he is sometimes tender, when he is off his guard ; so that I often flatter myself that 'tis rather his manners which are harsh, and not his nature hard. You see how I strive to sooth myself, and plead for him. He says he cannot be persuaded that she could die, in three days, unless it were of a French physician.

Sir Arthur Ashford, his sister, and Lord Lucan, are this moment arrived. I have never seen the Lady, but hear she is extremely handsome ; grant heaven that Lord Lucan may think so ! now, Fanny, you can have no doubts or fears.

Adieu, my sister—

L. BARTON.

L E T.

LETTER XVIII.

Lady BARTON to Miss CLEVELAND.

REPORT does not always exaggerate — Miss Ashford is really beautiful—the ladies of this country are in general remarkably fair, but the whiteness of her skin surpasses any that I have ever seen; her eyes are dark hazel, her hair jet black, which forms such a contrast to her neck and forehead, as images Shakespear's simile,

“Fairer than snow upon a raven's back.”

She is tall and thin, and though not elegantly made, appears perfectly genteel—while she sits still—but the moment she is thrown into motion, or emotion, she ceases to be lovely—a something
more

more than want of grace accompanies her action, and every movement of her head, or hands, seems performed in opposition to nature—in short she is the only young person I have ever seen, whom vivacity does not become. She seems sensible, mild, good-natured, and in every respect qualified for making an amiable figure—in *still life*.

I am much pleased to find that Sir William is extremely hospitable to his country neighbours, and likes to have company in his house. This tendency may doubtless be attended with some inconveniences, which I had rather submit to, than live unknown and unloved, amongst one's tenants and dependants—it is their industry and labour which supports our affluence, and they certainly have

have a right to a certain share in our enjoyments, in proportion to their rank and situation.

An accident that happened this morning, had like to have triumphed over Sir William's good humour, which is not of the invincible kind.—As we sat at breakfast, in a room that looks into the garden, I observed Miss Ashford's eyes fixed on a particular object, in the walk before us—I thought she seemed surprised, and I naturally directed a look of inquiry, to discover the occasion; which was a little basket, that appeared to move, though gently, of itself.

The moment I mentioned this circumstance, the gentlemen came to the window, and Lord Lucan flew directly into the garden,

garden, and explained the phenomenon, by bringing the basket and its contents into the parlour, which was an infant, about a week old, clean, though poorly clad, with a paper pinned to its breast, which said, *this child has been baptized by its father's name, William.*

This circumstance disconcerted Sir William, who, after many unnecessary asseverations of his innocence, upon this occasion, at which the whole company smiled, as they knew that he had been above a year out of the kingdom, determined to prove his virtue, at the expence of his humanity, by ordering the child to be again left in the garden where it was found, till the parish officers should come to take charge of it; and by commanding a strict search to be
made

made for the mother, that she might be punished, *according to law*.

We all opposed the severity of this resolution, as the poor infant appeared almost perished with cold, and hunger; but Sir William persisted in acting like an upright magistrate, according to the *letter of the law*—till Lord Lucan declared that he was ready to adopt the little foundling, and promised to take care of it for life, though his name was Thomas. Sir William then relaxed a little of his austerity, and gave vent to the remainder of it by attacking Lord Lucan with all the coarse raillery usual upon such occasions.

I confess I was pleased with this instance of his Lordship's humanity—I
have

have seen many others, even in the short term of our acquaintance—yet, at this instant, I could wish to have robbed him of this little act of benevolence, and have transferred it to Sir William—There is a secret and involuntary sympathy, that attaches us to generous minds—our affections are insensibly rivetted by esteem, and in that case we may defy even the power of time to break the charming tie ! O, why am I not bound in such a chain !

Though you will see by my letter, that I had nothing to say when I began to write, yet as it is probable that I shall not have half an hour's leisure, for some days to come, I have devoted the present moment to convince my Fanny that she is never absent from my thoughts, to enquire

quire after her's and Sir George's health, and to assure her of the sincerest regard, of her ever affectionate

L. BARTON.

LETTER XIX.

Miss CLEVELAND to Lady BARTON.

Distracted as I am with my own griefs, let me thank my dear sister for having removed some of those apprehensions which I had suffered on her account; and by that means leaving my heart, as it should now be, devoted to selfish, undivided sorrow.—Lord Hume is false, Louisa! I am forsaken, in the pride of youth; but for whom I know not.

I can-

I cannot write, read the inclosed, then give the hateful scroll to the devouring flames—no, send it back—alas! for what? the fatal lines are graved too deeply, on my breaking heart!

My brother set out for Paris, last week; a second letter from Mrs. Colville, more ambiguous than the former, determined him: I am glad he is gone, — I should have tried, but fear it would have been in vain, to hide my anguish from him—and he has griefs too weighty of his own, to suffer me to add resentment to them.

You say your heart is free from love, Louisa: O, triumph in that blest indifference! and know you cannot taste the extreme of wretchedness, without feel-

ing a tender passion for an unworthy object!

“ Ah! fond remembrance blinds me.”

If I were capable of joy, I should receive it from the hint you give, of your being soon likely to be blest with a proper object for your utmost sensibility! Repine no more, my sister, but let the current of your fondness flow in this most natural and pleasing course; in the rich channel of maternal love.

I intreat you to acquaint Sir William, as soon as possible, with this happy event; there are numberless reasons that render it proper: those you urge against it, are childish; your situation must naturally increase his tenderness, and of course your happiness, which is all that

CAN

can now diffuse the smallest gleam of satisfaction, to your ever affectionate

F. CLEVELAND.

P. S. I have this moment received a second letter from you, for which I return my thanks ; but am not, at present, able to write more.

LETTER XX.

Lord HUME to Miss CLEVELAND.

MADAM,

A Consciousness of error is, they say, the first step toward reformation ; but there are some cases, in which we may be sensible of having done amiss, yet find it impossible to amend : this is certainly a very unpleasing situation, and well worthy of pity, from a generous mind.

mind.—So circumstanced I acknowledge myself, and throw myself at your feet, for pardon.

Can you, madam, rise so far above the unworthy man who asks it, as to grant him your forgiveness, while he confesses that the natural inconstancy of his sex, and the mutability of his disposition, have triumphed over a passion, which was once his highest happiness, and honour; and which he then thought would have been as permanent, as his life?

I cannot, without descending to the meanness of a falsehood, affect to suppose that I am indifferent to you; I know but too well that I was honoured with a place in your affection—but I also know that

Miss

Miss Cleveland has sense and resolution sufficient to conquer her regards for one who owns himself unworthy of it—Humiliating confession!

Let me, however, madam, as a motive to your forgiveness, plead the small, and only merit, that is in my favour, the not having attempted to deceive you.—I can now only add, that notwithstanding the change of my affections, rather than my sentiments, I shall ever retain the sincerest respect, and, if I may be allowed the expression, the tenderest esteem, for Miss Cleveland, to whom I have the honour to be

a most devoted,

and obedient servant

HUME.

LETTER XXI.

Miss WESTLEY to Miss CLEVELAND.

Waltersburgh.

HOW happy should I be, my dear madam, in having the honour of paying my respects to you by letter, and thanking you for the kind partiality you have expressed in my favour, to my dear aunt, if her illness had not been the occasion of my writing: but don't be alarmed, madam, she is at present out of danger, though still so weak as to be unable to write, even to you.

She was taken ill, the day after she came here, and miscarried, the day following. How I grieve for the loss of my dear little cousin! he would have been a charming

ing play-thing for us all. You can't imagine how much my uncle has fretted about it : but though my poor dear aunt has the most reason to be sorry, she bears every thing with her usual sweetness of temper—but I need not expatiate on her gentleness, to you who know her, for every creature who does, must be charmed with her.

Miss Leister, who was to have been here with us, was confined with a quinzey, at Mr. Usher's, when my aunt grew ill ; but she came to us, yesterday, and the gentlemen are all gone to Dublin—It was intended that we should be very merry, when we arrived here, but I never saw such a dismal house ; I long to get back to Southfield, which I hope we shall be able to do, in a few days.

H 2

My

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My aunt desires me to assure you of her tenderest affection, and says she will write, the moment she can hold a pen.

I hope my dear Miss Cleveland will not take an aversion to me, for being the messenger of disagreeable news, but believe that it would have afforded me the sincerest pleasure, to have informed her that my aunt was as well and happy as I know she deserves to be, and I most truly wish her. I have the honour to be, dear madam,

your much obliged,

and most obedient servant

HARRIET WESTLEY.

P. S. I don't know whether you are acquainted with Lord Lucan; but I can't

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help telling you, that he had the misfortune to sprain his leg, so that he could not dance, or walk, even the first day he came — there never was any thing so unlucky as this party has been! for every one has had something to distress them.

LETTER XXII.

Miss CLEVELAND to Miss WESTLEY.

I Lament with you, my dear Harriet, that our correspondence should commence on an occasion so painful to us both, as Lady Barton's illness; but I should be unworthy of that regard which you seem inclined to shew me, if it were possible that I should conceive any dislike to you, for acquainting me with our common misfortune, I mean the loss of our

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little cousin—however, as you assure me that my sister is at present out of danger, I think we may reasonably hope that our present loss may be repaired in future, and that we may yet have many pretty play-things, in which we shall be mutually interested.

The sweetness of Lady Barton's temper must interest all who know her, in her sufferings of every kind, and lessen even to herself the painful sensations arising from her present disagreeable situation—Such is the potent power of gentleness! I have no doubt of your tender attachment to her; there is a natural sympathy between the good and amiable, which far exceeds the ties either of affinity or consanguinity.

I have not the honour of knowing Lord Lucan, but am sorry for the accident he
has

has met with, both for his sake and yours, as I fancy his lameness interfered with the amusement you proposed to yourself, in dancing.—But we are all liable to disappointments, my young friend; and may this be one of the greatest that you shall ever experience!

Assure my beloved sister of my fervent and unceasing wishes for her speedy recovery. And believe me to be my dear Miss Westley's

affectionate friend

and servant

F. CLEVELAND.

H 4

L E T:

LETTER XXIII.

Lady BARTON to Miss CLEVELAND.

Waltersburgh.

MY dearest Fanny, I lay hold of the first possible moment to calm your fears for my safety, I mean with regard to my health : Harriet, by my desire, has given you an account of the accident that befel me here ; but she and all the world are strangers to the cause of it.

But before I enter into a detail, that must affect you, let me congratulate my dearest sister upon the timely discovery of lord Hume's inconstancy — Rejoice, my Fanny, that this worthless man is not your husband ! and that you are at
liberty

liberty to indulge your resentment, or contempt, *without a breach of duty*— This, though you may not be sensible of it, is certainly an alleviation of the misery which arises from ill-placed love—but time, and your sense and virtue will, I hope, enable you to triumph over any remain of weakness, for such an unworthy object—Yet, contemptible as he is, I cannot help being pleased with his letter; frankness always charms me, and, like charity, in my mind it covers a multitude of faults.

Do not, from what I have said, imagine that I think lightly of your present distress; I am convinced, that to a heart tender and good as yours, it must be severe; but I also know, that there are other situations much more intolerable,

and I am almost tempted to exclaim with Lord Littleton.—

“What are, alas! thy woes, compared to mine?”

You shall be yourself the judge, and I will now proceed.

Sir Arthur, Miss Ashford, Lord Lucan, Sir William, Harriet, and I, set out together for this place, the Monday after I wrote to you—We were to have met Mrs. Layton, Miss Leister, the family of the Ushers, and several other ladies and gentlemen of the neighbourhood—The first mortification I received, was hearing that my Lucy was ill of a sore throat, and could not come from Usher's Grove; her aunt, and the rest of the family came, but were all to return after supper.

I told

I told you, in my last, that I had refused to dance with Colonel Walter; I was also asked by Lord Lucan, but desired to be excused, and entreated he would take Miss Ashford for his partner. He said he would obey me, and accordingly desired the honour of her hand, which she readily granted—About a quarter of an hour before the ball began, he unluckily strained his leg, and was not able to fulfil his engagement.—Sir William, though not fond of dancing, was polite enough to supply his place, and Lord Lucan and I were reduced to play at quadrille, with a couple of dowagers, and an old parson.

The evening, however, passed off, very tolerably, and we retired to our chambers about twelve o'clock. The gentle-

men had agreed to meet and hunt, the next morning; and I determined to pay a visit to Lucy, between breakfast and dinner, that day; for the Colonel had insisted on our not leaving him till the next.

According to appointment with his companions of the chase, Sir William rose early, and left me asleep; I had resolved not to acquaint him with my situation, till our return to Southfield; as I knew that many coarse jests and common-place sayings would pass, on the occasion; which I should wish to avoid, at all times, but especially before strangers.

About eight o'clock in the morning, I was waked by a person who knelt at my bedside, and pressed my hand to their lips—the chamber was dark, I could
only.

only distinguish that it was a man, and instantly concluded him to be Lord Lucan; from this circumstance only, that I recollected Colonel Walter was to have rode out with Sir William.—I strove to withdraw my hand, but could not; upon which I addressed him with the strongest expressions of surprize and resentment, at his having dared to take so unwarrantable a liberty; to which, he answered, only in a whisper, entreating me to forgive the effects of a passion too violent to be restrained.—He then attempted to press his lips to mine, and when I was going to ring my bell, I heard Sir William's voice upon the stairs, and fainted.

When I came to myself, I found Miss Ashford, Sir William, and Harriet, in
the

the room, standing about my bed-side—I suffered infinite anxiety at that instant, to know whether Sir William had found Lord Lucan in my chamber, and what had passed between them? Harriet and Miss Ashford were bathing my temples with lavender water, while Sir William held one of my hands between his, and as soon as he found that I was recovering, press'd it gently, and withdrew; saying that he supposed ladies understood how to manage one another better, in such circumstances, than he—his calmness amazed me! in short the various emotions of my mind, for some time, are not to be expressed.

I determined, on the instant, to return to Southfield directly, let the consequence be what it would; and never to suffer

Lord

Lord Lucan to come into my sight again; but, alas! when I attempted to rise, I found it impossible; the agitation of my mind, had disorder'd my whole frame; my illness encreased every moment, a messenger was dispatched for a physician, but before he could arrive——

When Sir William was informed of my misfortune, he raved and stamped like a mad-man; said I must have designed to destroy his heir, out of perverseness, or I would certainly have acquainted him with my situation—while, Heaven knows, I would have given my own life, with pleasure, to have saved my child.

I continued in a state of such extreme weakness, for four days, that I saw no creature but Benson, who had been sent
2 for

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for express, the doctor, and Harriet, who wept continually by me—I never can forget the dear girl's tenderness.

On the fifth morning, Sir William came into the room, and with an air of the utmost dissatisfaction, told me he was very sorry for the loss of his boy, but hoped I should do well; and as he could not be of any use to a sick person, he had resolved to attend the meeting of parliament, and should set out for Dublin, with the Colonel and Lord Lucan, directly—that as soon as I was able, I might either return to Southfield, or follow him to town, as I liked best.—But that I need not be in a hurry to move, for his *good friend* had left orders that I should be as well attended, as if I were in my own house; and that Lucy Leister was now recovered, and

and would come that day to Waltersburg, to keep me company.—He then gave me a cool kiss, and withdrew.

I rejoiced extremely, at hearing that Lord Lucan was to go with Sir William; for though my life was at stake, I would not have remained in the same house with him, after my husband had left it; besides it saved me the difficulty of an interview, which my poor weak brain had been studying to avoid, the whole time of my illness—Yet I had doubts and fears that he might insolently have made a pretence to stay behind, till Benson assured me that she saw him set out, at the same time with Sir William and the Colonel.

Just as he was going off, he gave the enclosed note to Harriet, to deliver to
me

me as soon as I should be able to read it; the sweet girl could not conceal her emotion about it, she feared she had done wrong in receiving it, and, with her cheeks covered with blushes, and her eyes filled with tears, she presented it to me, begging I would excuse her if she had acted improperly.

I never was more embarrassed, in my life, than at that moment; I could have no doubt but that his letter was filled with apologies for the audaciousness of his conduct, and to read it was in some measure to admit of his excuses.—But while I hesitated, Harriet, whose impatience seemed to be extreme, had broken the seal, and said, shall I read it to you, Madam? Luckily for me that part of the chamber I sat in, was so much darkened

ened by a large screen, that she did not discover my confusion; therefore taking my silence for consent, she proceeded to read, as follows.

To Lady BARTON.

PERMIT me, Madam, to express those ardent wishes for your recovery, which I have never ceased to breathe to heaven, from the first moment of your illness—wishes as pure, as warm, and as disinterested, as brothers form for a beloved sister! I hoped to have had the honour of seeing you before I leave Waltersburgh, and I have many reasons to lament the loss of that happiness; but the cause which has prevented it, is even more a subject of regret, than the effect; and, like Aaron's rod, has swallowed up all other considerations.

May

May returning health await your couch,
and may every happiness that heaven can
grant to merit such as yours, be as truly
thine, as the sincere respect and esteem
of him, who has the honour to be, Madam,
your Ladyship's

most obedient servant,

LUCAN.

P. S. If it be not thought too pre-
suming, I should request the favour of
your permission for Miss Westley to hon-
our me with a line, to inform me of your
health.

I never felt surprise more strongly,
than at hearing this letter; and my amaze-
ment was rather increased, by the tre-
pidation and hurry of Harriet's voice and
manner, in reading it, who, on the instant
she

she had finished, desired I would give her leave to write his lordship an account of my health, by that very night's post.—This I absolutely forbid; but, in order to change the subject, told her I would employ her in a more interesting correspondence, and desired she would immediately write to you.

I confess to you, Fanny, that Lord Lucan's letter has puzzled me so much, that I sometimes think it impossible he could have been guilty of the insult I have charged him with, and not attempted to have made some apology for it.—Yet who else could have dared to enter my chamber; or, indeed, who else was in the house, at the time? I am almost tempted to persuade myself, sometimes, that it was only a dream or vision, that
alarmed

alarmed me—at other times my mind suggests some scruples to itself, for not having acquainted Sir William with the affair.—But then again, in that case, I must have hazarded my husband's and some other person's life! dreadful thought! No, let me rather suffer all that fate can inflict on innocence, than be the cause of one man's death, or misery!

The moment that Lord Lucan left the house, I felt as if a weight had been taken off my heart—I have grown better every hour since, and the company of my Lucy and Harriet makes me not regret the absence of any other person, but yourself—For heaven's sake, my dearest Fanny, no longer deny me and yourself the indulgence of sharing my heart, and alleviating its anxieties! you have now
nothing

nothing to detain you in England; my brother will most probably stay abroad, some years.—But I will not say more; for if your own inclination and my situation do not impel you, I would not wish that my persuasions or intreaties should compel you.

I have been three days about this letter, and think it high time to conclude; but must first acquaint you that the day Benson came here, she discovered a private door in my chamber, which leads to another apartment, through which I conclude that Lord Lucan had made both his entry and retreat; or else Sir William must have met him going out of my room, at the time I fainted. — Adieu, my Fanny; I will write to you, as soon as I get to South-

Southfield, which will be, at farthest, in three days.

Yours ever,

L. BARTON.

LETTER XXIV.

Miss CLEVELAND to Lady BARTON.

WHY must I tell my dear Louisa, that the contents of her letter abated the pleasure I received from seeing that her hand had superscribed it? this little circumstance gave me an idea of your perfect recovery, while the same characters on the inside, trace out a tale of unhappiness and distress! and who can hope for health, while the mind suffers?

There is something very extraordinary, in the adventure you have met with,

at

at Waltersburgh; but your surmise on that occasion does not appear to me to have the least foundation—on the contrary, I would almost hazard any bett, that Lord Lucan was incapable of treating you with such disrespect. It is impossible, I think, from the whole contour of his character, to suppose that he could be guilty of such an outrage to decency and honour; still more incredible to believe, that he should never since have thought proper to offer any sort of excuse for such a behaviour, especially as he proceeded so far as to frame an opportunity to himself for doing so, by the *respectful freedom* of his letter to you; for an action too, which was so unfortunate in its consequences, to the woman he loves—for that he loves, is but too obvious.

Who then could it be? That indeed, I must be at a loss to answer, any more than yourself.—I am half persuaded, and I wish I was intirely so, that it was only a dream—But be that as it may, I think you were perfectly right, in concealing the affair from Sir William, as the knowledge of it must have been fatal, at least to his repose, and yours.

I am very sorry, that Sir William should have shewn more regret for the loss of his son, than concern for your illness; but parental fondness is, I fear, a stronger and more general affection, in male minds, than conjugal love.—But, indeed, my dear, you deserve a little mortification for your false delicacy, in concealing your situation from him; so kiss the rod, and have done
 who I ... whim.

whimpering, as we say to naughty children.

I most earnestly wish that the business of parliament had not called Sir William from home, at this juncture; I long till he and you are settled in a domestic way, at Southfield—I own I am alarmed at a married woman's meeting with adventures of the novel kind—in the absence of her husband—

“The wife, where danger or dishonour lurks,
 “Safest and seemliest by her husband stays,
 “Who guards her, or with her the worst endures.”

To say truth, I think you in almost as much danger as our fair mother, to whom these words were addressed, for there certainly is a serpent in the grass, somewhere, *autour de vous*—You have, however, the advantage of being warned of

your danger, provided you construe the *billet* you sent me as its first *whisper*; and, as a woman's best safety is found in retreat, I wish you would resolve to withdraw yourself from any further intimacy, either with Lord Lucan, or Colonel Walter—believe me, my Louisa, they are both dangerous intimates, though in a different way.

I receive your congratulation as I am sure it is meant; and though my mind is not yet strong enough to consider the discovery of Lord Hume's inconstancy, as a subject for rejoicing at, yet I agree with you, that had this change in his affections happened after I had become his wife, the misfortune would have certainly been more insupportable; though I cannot, even at present, avail myself of
the

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the resource you offer me, of hating or despising a man whom I once loved—The utmost I ever hope to arrive at, is to be able to speak of my affection for him, in the past tense only; and the most effectual way to arrive at that end, is to mention him as little as possible, for the future. I hope your next letter will inform me of your returning health, and happiness; I need the assistance of them both, to support my present wretchedness—May they long attend my beloved sister, sincerely prays her affectionate

F. CLEVELAND.

LETTER XXV.

Lord LUCAN to Lord HUME.

DEAR Hume, I should be extremely pleased, if I could, like you, consider the transformation of Ovid, as a series of serious and natural events; for as I have, for some time past, become extremely weary of my present form or mode of existence, I should be inclined to flatter myself, that any change must be for the better; but the metempsychosis of Pythagoras would suit me still better than the metamorphoses of Ovid; I should like to carry my identity with me, into whatever being my spirit was appointed to animate, as I think the consciousness of the sufferings I now endure, would render any state, except
that

that of a ferocious animal, agreeable to me.

But to be serious—I have been, for some months past, uncommonly wretched; the fate of her who is the arbiter of mine, hung for an age in doubtful balance. I never knew the extreme of misery, till then; for, alas! I had never before given myself leave to think she was mortal! Yes, Hume, all that I love in life was near the grave! and I sustained the shock like a philosopher—I sighed and wept in secret; while to the world I wore the specious mask of mere humanity.—This was as much as I had power to do; and he that says philosophy can go beyond this mark, and teach us not to feel, mistakes its use, and makes dull apathy usurp its place.

I 4

I don't

I don't know that ever I felt so much pleasure in writing as at this moment; it certainly relieves our oppression to unburthen our hearts, and you are my only confidant — This declaration may appear strange to you, who know so little of the particulars of my attachment; but when I affirm, that no person breathing knows so much, not even the dear object of it, you may, nay you must, accept the title.

From your last letter, which I have read over several times, I have collected two things which give me sincere pleasure, but will surprise you extremely; the first is, that you endeavour to persuade yourself that you love Margarita much better than you really do: and the second, that you not only re-
spect

spect and esteem, but still love Miss Cleveland! I hope you have written to her, Hume—Every woman of worth and honour has, and ought to have, a proper pride; neglect is therefore the most unpardonable of all offences that a man can commit—I speak of men, not brutes; rudeness is, of course, out of the question.

I was extremely diverted at the many ridiculous ideas you formed of the object of my passion; but this, be assured of, and let it satisfy you, that neither her mind or body have been perverted by any kind of art, but that she is at this instant the most perfect work of the great and universal Artist, that I have ever yet beheld! though perhaps she may not have struck you, (for you have

seen her,) with the same idea of perfection.

I perfectly agree with you that the word *happiness* has as many various meanings, as there are tempers and constitutions in the world ; to confine it therefore to any taste, passion, or mode of life, would be just as absurd as to drain your ponds, that your fish may fly ; and flood your aviaries, that your birds may swim. Be it, therefore, unto you, as you have wished it unto me, that is, as you choose it.—Adieu, my dear Hume.

Yours most truly,

LUCAN.

LET

LETTER XXVI.

Lord HUME to Lord LUCAN.

Venice.

I Have often told you, my dear Lucan, that I never trouble myself to investigate causes for any thing that happens; effects are enough for me: so that whether your *transmogrification* be according to the Ovidian, or Pythagorean system, is of no sort of consequence; for *transmogrified* you are, to all intents and purposes—You may divert yourself with looking for the etymology of that word, but though I don't believe you will be able to find its derivation in any dictionary, it is a devilish good one, for all that, and truly expressive of my meaning.

Why, my dear metamorphosed friend, you had nothing of the *Catullus* strain in you, while you lived among us here. But there are peculiar disorders incident to certain climates, and an heavy atmosphere naturally makes people draw their breath in sighs. Fly then for your life, my dear patient, and take the *air of the world*, once more among us again, before your ailment has confirmed itself into a Platonic asthma in the bogs of Ireland.

You have puzzled me to the last line of a riddle, by saying that I have often seen your Lesbia—pr'ythee, be good natured, Lucan, and tell me when, and where; for guessing is rather troublesome. there can be no sort of danger in letting me know who she is, as you are
already

already convinced that I don't like her; or if I did, may I perish if I would attempt to rival my friend with any woman breathing; you may, therefore, be perfectly safe, in making me a real confidant, instead of a nominal one.

Margarita and I have been here this fortnight, and in that time we have contrived to lose a good round sum at play: she thinks we have been overmatched, by the Venetians, and wants to try our fortune at Rome; but I must wait for remittances from England, before I can make this or any other experiment of the kind.

You are mistaken, Lucan. I love Margarita most truly; and, what is much more extraordinary, my affection for her
rather

rather increafes than abates—I have my-
 ſelf been made ſenſible of this, tho' not
 in the moſt agreeable manner; for I have
 lately felt ſomewhat of that hydra of ca-
 lamities, jealousy—and this, though I am
 perfectly ſatiſfied that my ſweet girl gave
 me no ſort of cauſe, on her part, and
 would not quit me, for an emperor—

“ Tell me, my heart, if this be love ? ”

You are in ſome meaſure right, with
 regard to my ſentiments for Fanny
 Cleveland. — I certainly do moſt tho-
 roughly eſteem her, and have given the
 ſtrongeſt proof of my having an high
 opinion of her underſtanding, by wri-
 ting a very fooliſh letter, acknowledging
 myſelf, what, I dare ſay, your wiſe wor-
 ſhip already thinks me, a very filly fel-
 low.—I don't know, but as you ſay, I
 may love her too—that is, according

to

to your plan of loving, *à la seraphique* — but I have no idea of that sort of passion which can admit of a doubt, or allow us time to reason about the why or wherefore of the matter—Let me be charmed! my senses captivated! and let reason go to the schools, if it will; for I never found it of any use, but to torment me.—I am all impatience for my remittances; I don't like this place, nor does Margarita, though she has a number of relations here, brothers and cousins, by the dozen; but they are all priests, and I am apprehensive that some of these infatuates may persuade her to quit me, and lock her up in a convent—the dear girl sometimes alarms me much, by talking religiously; but if I can get her to Rome once, there will be an end of these fears; for I am told, that there is not even the shadow of devotion there.

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It is now two o'clock at noon, and Margarita has not yet blessed my eyes; I fear she is not well—I must go to enquire her health. I hope your fair one is recovered: do, tell me all about her, in your next. Direct to me at Rome; I forget where, but to the care of your former Banker.

Adio, mio caro amico.

HUME.

LETTER XXVII.

Lady BARTON to Miss CLEVELAND.

Southfield.

THANK Heaven, my dearest Fanny, I have at last escaped out of that worse than lyon's den, that detestable Colonel Walter's house!—On the day

day after I wrote last to you, as the weather was remarkably fine, for the season, I insisted on Lucy and Harriet's going out to take the air; and, in order to harden myself for my removal, I ventured into the room adjoining mine, which is a very large and handsome library.—Benson had told me, that, since the Colonel went to Dublin, she had sometimes seen a beautiful little girl, of four years old, running about the house, but that the child could not speak English; and that the servants were extremely ill-natured to the poor baby, who used to weep when she could not make herself understood; that she was perfectly engaging in her manner, and seemed to take a liking to Benson; that she had enquired, as much as was proper, who the child belonged to, and was constantly answered,

answered, that they knew nothing more of her, than that she was one of their master's *importations*.

Upon this report I confess that I felt my relationship to dame Eve very strongly; and desired Benson to bring the child to me, the first opportunity—She accordingly led her by the hand into the library, on the day I have mentioned; but the moment the child saw me, she would have fled, and exclaimed in French, O my papa will kill me! I replied to her, in her own language, and assured her that no harm should happen to her—She smiled upon me, and asked was I a French-woman? if I was, she would love me dearly; for all the people in this place, she said, were cross, and cruel, except her poor mama, that she believed was dying

dying—She then hid her face, with her little hands, and burst into a passion of tears.

I need not tell you how I was affected—She became instantly sensible of my tenderness, and suffered Benson to lead her to me, and set her on my knee; but though she leaned her head upon my neck, and seemed pleased with my caresses, I could perceive that fear predominated over every other sensation, by her eyes being constantly directed to the door, and her appearing alarmed, at every noise.—I asked her where her mama was? She paused for a few moments, and then replied, I was not forbidden to tell that; she is above stairs, lying upon her bed, and that bed is on the ground—We don't lye so in France.

The

The innocence and sensibility of her remark quite overcame me—She took my handkerchief, and dried my eyes; then said, “Don’t weep! pray don’t! you don’t “sleep upon the ground, nor any one “else, I believe, except my poor mama.” Again I kissed the lovely little pratler—I desired her to tell her mama, that I should be glad to see her—She shook her head, and said that was impossible; for her mama was too sick to come out of her room; but if she were well, she must not disobey her papa, and he had commanded her never to stir out, while she lived.—Then said I, my dear, I will go up to her—She answered quick, “No! “no! that cannot be, the servants would “tell my papa.”—I asked her would she carry a letter to her mama? she said yes—I then asked her mama’s name, and she answered

answered D'Olivet—I instantly sat down and wrote in French, what follows—

A MADAME D' OLIVET.

Madam,

I have this day seen and conversed with your lovely daughter ; and, from her innocent, yet sensible discourse, I have learned that you are ill, and unhappy.—I have reason to apprehend that the treatment you have received, from a gentleman of this country, may naturally prejudice you against all its inhabitants; but let me assure you, that humanity and justice are the real characteristics of this nation ; and that if you stand in need of either, you may depend on meeting them in the highest degree, both from our manners, and our laws.

I beg

I beg leave now, Madam, to offer you any assistance that is in the power of an individual of your own sex, of some rank and consideration in this country; who will esteem it a very great happiness if she can be in any way serviceable to the injured, or oppressed; and who most solemnly assures you, that whatever confidence you are pleased to repose in her, shall never be made use of, but to your own advantage, as it is not curiosity, but compassion, that inclines her to interest herself in your concerns.—If you think an interview with the writer of this proper, please to contrive the means, and she will most readily concur with your design, as she is possessed of the sincerest inclination, though unknown to you, to do every thing that may be in her

her power, for your service; and is with great truth, your unknown friend,

L. BARTON.

The child carried away the billet, and returned in less than ten minutes, to tell me that her mama had neither pen, ink, or paper; but if I would be so good to let her have them, she would write an answer immediately; and in the mean time returned me a thousand thanks, for the honour of my letter.—The dear little Olivet took my hand, kissed it, and said she was sure she should love me; for she thought I had done her mama good already. — I immediately furnished her with my own *porte-feuille*, which contained all the necessary implements for writing; and waited, not without some degree of impatience, to have this mystery

tery explained.—Lucy and Harriet returned from their airing, soon after this adventure; but I did not think it proper to mention the affair to them, till I was more fully informed myself.—I heard nothing farther of the child, or her mother, till I retired into my bed-chamber, and then Benson gave me a letter in French, which I send you inclosed.

To Lady BARTON.

Madam,

No words can adequately express my sense of your goodness to me; but my gratitude shall, while I have life, be poured forth in fervent prayers for your happiness.—This, alas! is the sole return that I can make to Heaven, or to you, whose blessed instrument I am sure you are, to speak peace and comfort to a dy-

ing wretch, and smoothe her passage from this vale of misery !

Ah, Madam ! may you never know the transports I received from reading your dear letter ! they can only be felt by one equally unhappy with me, if such another wretch there be on earth, who, long denied the blessings of society, debarred even the power of speaking to be understood, should have an angel come and utter, words of comfort and compassion.

Forgive me, Madam, but I cannot help considering you as a superior being, sent to the relief of misery like mine ! O, may you think so too, and ease my last sad moments of their sharpest pangs ! It is not for myself I plead, but for my innocent, my unoffending child ! Receive a

more than orphan to your care, and my last sigh shall waft my thanks to heaven!

Even the short story of my misfortunes, is much too long for my weak hand to write; but if you will permit me, Madam, to throw myself at your feet, when all the family are retired to rest, and condescend to lend an ear to my sad tale, I will relate it with the same truth and frankness, as I would to my confessor; you shall supply that solace long denied me, and from your gracious lips I hope for absolution.

I have now no terms to keep with Colonel Walter; the hour approaches that must dissolve all the engagements that ever were between us: how he has fulfilled his part of them, Heaven and his
own

own heart can tell! but even in my death, I would not wish to offend him; and were there not a much dearer concern than my own life at stake, I would conceal his unkindness to the last moment of my existence, would suffer my wrongs to be buried with me, and sleep for ever in the silent grave.—But my Olivia! my lovely little babe! pulls at my heart-strings! and can I then decline the offer of your kindness, and not strive to interest your compassion, for her future fate? impossible! circumstanced as I am, the mother must prevail over every other tie.—I therefore again entreat the honour of being admitted to your presence, this night; I will come softly down the back-stairs that join to the library, and there wait till your woman shall conduct me to you—In the mean

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time, and ever, allow me to subscribe myself, with the most heart-felt gratitude, your ladyship's most obliged,

and devoted servant,

OLIVIA WALTER.

Judge of my feelings, at reading this letter, by your own! But though I know you will be displeased at my quitting the story here, I must break off, as the post is going out, and I cannot send this without telling you that I have no remains of my late indisposition, but weakness—Peace of mind, and exercise will, I hope, soon restore my former strength—To-morrow, my Fanny, I will indulge you with the remainder of this affecting narrative, till then—

Adieu,

L. BARTON.

LET-

LADY BARTON. 197

Lady BARTON to Miss CLEVELAND.

LETTER XXVIII.

THE moment I had read Mrs. Walter's letter, I sent Benson to wait her coming at the appointed place.—As some of the family were not yet gone to bed, I had near half an hour's leisure to reflect on the uncommon villainy of Colonel Walter! If this lady was his wife, which I could have no doubt of, from her taking his name, how did he dare to propose marriage to Mrs. Layton? But this circumstance appeared trifling, when compared to the inhumanity of his behaviour to the unfortunate Olivia, and her lovely child! At length Benson tapped softly at my door, and I rose to receive

a being that seemed no longer an inhabitant of this world.—From the child's account of her mother's illness, I was prepared to see a person pale, and emaciated; but any thing so near our idea of a beautiful spectre, never yet, I believe, struck mortal sight.

I must describe her to you—her stature is some-what above the middle size, but the extreme thinness of her figure, made her appear still taller—her eyes are large, and of the darkest blue; her nose aquiline, with the most beautiful mouth and teeth I ever saw; her skin fairer than alabaster, and so clear, that one might fancy they saw the circulation of the blood, which supplied a faint blushing in her cheeks, resembling the inner tints of a white rose; her hair of a light shining brown,
flowed

flowed in loose tresses upon her shoulders—her gown was a white silk polonese; she had on a gauze hood, tied loosely under her chin, and a slight covering of the same sort, upon her neck; she appeared all form without substance, spirit without matter; and had she prophesied, my faith would have listened, as to an angel:—

As she entered my room, she made an effort, which I was not lucky enough to prevent, to throw herself at my feet—when I attempted to raise her from the ground, I had not strength sufficient, for she had fainted there; with Benson's assistance and mine, she recovered, in about ten minutes, then gushed into such a flood of tears, as took away all power of

speech, and almost suffocated her; she often tried to speak, and implore my pardon for the distress and trouble she had occasioned me; and you may suppose that I said every thing in my power to calm her mind.

As soon as she became a little collected, she said it was joy, not sorrow, that had overpowered her weak frame; the latter she had been too familiar with, but the former was indeed such a long absent guest, that it must be welcomed with some degree of transport.—If the delicacy of her sentiments had needed any addition, they would have received the highest from the sweetness of her voice, and the uncommon beauty of her mouth, while she uttered them.

In

In order to restrain her acknowledgements for my interesting myself about her and her child, I pressed her to relate her story, and to account for the extraordinary appearances arising from her situation. She bowed, and proceeded with so much grace and elegance of expression, that I could have hung with mute attention on her speech, for a whole winter's night, or a long summer's day, and never wished her tale to have an end!

The Story of Mrs. WALTER.

I had the misfortune to lose my father, who had the honour of being a general officer in the king of Sardinia's service, when I was but eleven years old; his name was d'Alembert—as he had many great and lucrative employments; and my mother and he were both young,

they indulged themselves in a thoughtless extravagance together, at Turin, during his life—But at his decease, my mother, no longer able to support the rank she had held at that court, retired to Briançon, to live upon the small patrimony which remained for her and me.

Young as I was, the loss of a fond father made a very deep impression on my mind; and the perpetual affliction to which I saw my mother had devoted herself, and which terminated her life in two years, brought me full early acquainted with sorrow.

After this irreparable loss, I remained at Briançon, under the care of an old maiden aunt of my father's, who had lived too much sequestered from the world,

world, and who, ignorant of the nature of youth, or how to guide it, supplied the place of instruction, with austerity, never suffered me to be a moment out of her sight, and was for ever extolling her own goodness and charity, in being troubled with the care of my education and maintenance.—In short, her manners were perfectly disagreeable, and so extremely different from that delicacy and tenderness, to which I had been too much accustomed, that, tho' I strove to respect her, as my aunt, I found it impossible either to love or esteem her.—The affections of young and amiable minds cannot center in themselves; and if they are not properly attached by the ties of affinity, or kindness, they will most probably bestow themselves on improper objects.—This was unluckily my case.

The only person I was suffered to converse with, except my aunt, and that only at home, was a girl about three years elder than myself, whose mother had been formerly a servant to mine, but at that time kept an inn at Briançon.— This girl then, as was natural, I became extremely fond of; and as my aunt grew every day more infirm, and was often confined to her bed, I found frequent opportunities of visiting my dear Nannette, unknown to my severe guardian, at her mother's house.

In one of these, till then, innocent excursions, my ill fate contrived that Colonel Walter should arrive at Briançon, and stop at the house where I was—It was summer, the evening fine, and, as he had no company, he sauntered into
the

the garden, where Nannette and I were sitting at work, in an arbour—He accosted us with great politeness, and I could perceive that my companion was highly pleased with his address—But the timidity natural to a person who had been brought up in so retired a manner as I had been, made me wish to withdraw; and, notwithstanding his, and Nannette's solicitations to the contrary, I quickly returned home, possessed with the first idea I had ever felt, of having done wrong.

I saw, by the Colonel's appearance, that he was an officer; the recollection of my father struck forcibly into my mind, and I blushed with indignation to think that general d'Alembert's daughter had been seen in so improper a situation.

My pride was, however, consoled by thinking that I should never see him again; and I determined to be more guarded, in my future visits to my friend.

The next morning, very early, Nannette was at my bedside, and expressed some degree of resentment at my having quitted her so abruptly, the preceeding night — my delicacy would not suffer me to hurt her pride, by telling her my real motive for retiring; I therefore said that it was owing to my apprehensions of being missed by my aunt; but that I got off undiscovered, and should not be so cowardly, another time: she seemed satisfied with this declaration, and pressed me to come to her, that evening. She had an intire ascendant over me, and notwithstanding the resolution

lution I had made a few hours before, I readily promised to attend her.

I had no doubt but that the Colonel would by that time have quitted Briançon; and I would not venture to ask a question relative to him, lest it might lead her to suspect my thoughts: she however talked of him incessantly; said he was the handsomest, and most agreeable gentleman she had ever seen; told me he had invited her mother and her to supper, and behaved to them as if they were princesses; and added she was glad he did not live in that country, as she feared another interview might engage too much of her affections. She rattled away in this manner, till I was summoned to attend my aunt, and then made me repeat my promise of going to her

her the moment the old lady should retire to rest.

My aunt was, if possible, more peevish than usual that whole day, or at least her ill temper had a more than common effect upon my spirits—I longed for the evening to be released from her tyranny, and to be indulged with the liberty of pouring forth my little sorrows in the bosom of my faithful Nannette.

The moment that my aunt had dismissed me from her chamber, I flew to my appointment, without waiting to alter my dress, which was a perfect *dehabille*, and found Nannette in the arbour, adorned with every little ornament that she was possessed of. My thoughts

thoughts were too much affected with the disagreeableness of my own situation, to make reflections on the gaiety of her appearance.

I seated myself by her, leaned my head upon her bosom, and, with a profusion of tears, told her I was no longer able to bear the misery I suffered from my aunt's severity.—She smiled, and, as I thought, with an air of triumph, told me that I might put an end to my misfortunes, as soon as I pleased, for that the Colonel had assured her he had visited all the courts in Europe, and had never seen any thing half so beautiful, as either she, or I.—That for her part she was resolved to try her fortune in the world, forthwith, and not stay moping at Briançon till she grew old and ugly;
and

and that if I would accompany her, she did not at all doubt of our success; that I might hope to marry some reigning prince, and that she might at least expect to be mistress of a dukedom.

I was both shocked, and surprised, at hearing my friend talk in this extravagant and unusual stile; but before I could express my sentiments, Colonel Walter came into the arbour, dressed as if he had been going to court on a gala day—I confess I was struck, nay dazzled, with his appearance—from the time of my leaving Turin, I had never seen any man finely or elegantly dressed, before: I now quickly perceived the advantages that Nannette received from being decked out, and blushed at the inferiority of my own appearance.

Every

Every human creature has, I believe, some sparks of vanity in their nature, and this was the fatal moment when mine were first kindled : a desire of outshining Nannette, who had a good deal disgusted me, took immediate possession of my thoughts, and my countenance was, upon the instant, lighted up with smiles.—I have not a doubt but Colonel Walter saw through the thin veil that covered the sentiments of a creature so young and artless as I was then; he at least indulged my weakness, even beyond my wishes, by intirely devoting his whole attention to me, and totally neglecting my companion.

Olivia here broke off her narrative, to apologize for entering into such minute circumstances, which she said was meant

to

to convince me of her sincerity, as she was very certain that her weakness and innocence were the ground works of her ruin—"But, alas! (exclaimed she,) is there not indulgence and compassion due to uneducated uninformed fifteen!"

I told her that her entering into those little traits of character, those fine, those delicate touches, marked the master's hand, and were a convincing proof of the goodness, both of her head and heart. She complimented me on my candor, and returned to her story.

There had been the most elegant repast provided, that Briançon could afford; Nannette, and her mother, the Colonel and I, were all the party; but I was the idol to whom all the incense was offered. The good woman of the
house

house took the *ton* from her guest, extolled my beauty and my accomplishments, as extravagantly, though not so agreeably, as he.—Nannette alone was silent—In short, I became intoxicated with flattery; and when the time of our parting drew near, I secretly lamented at the same idea which had given me so much satisfaction, the preceding night—that I should see Colonel Walter no more!

The Colonel insisted on attending me home, and had ordered his chaise to convey me to my aunt's—But though my vanity was flattered with this mark of attention, I dared not indulge it with such an éclat; however, I said I would permit him to walk home with me, provided Nannette would accompany us—She sullenly refused—I had
then

then no choice, and the Colonel and I set out together.

When we were about to separate, I wished him a good night, and a pleasant journey—He threw himself at my feet, caught hold of my hand, swore I was the sovereign arbitress of his fate, and that he would never leave Briançon, till he had obtained my hand, and heart; but that if I cruelly refused to accept his love, he would put himself to death, that instant, before me.

Child as I was, his transports terrified me; I was also alarmed lest any of my aunt's servants should see him, so I promised, if he would then retire, to meet him, the next evening, at the inn.—He made a merit of assenting to so long

long an absence, and after a thousand protestations of the most ardent passion, and as many more tender adieus, he left me plunged in such a fatal, yet pleasing delirium, as youth and experience only, can feel. What an infidel should I have thought the person who had at that moment warned me to discredit the sincerity of his profession! The night passed away, without sleep, yet I thought it short, and arose, next morning, even with unusual vivacity—My aunt's ill temper was no longer disagreeable to me, my spirits were perfectly harmonized, all was peace within, and cheerfulness without—Towards evening I began to think that time lagged heavily in its course, and wished for the setting of the sun, as much as a benighted traveller for its rising.

At

At length the welcome night arrived, and set me free from my restraint; I ran to my toilet to endeavour to adorn the few graces that nature had lent me.—In vain — confusion interrupted my efforts, and haste prevented my dispatch, so that, in a kind of despair, I threw aside my few ornaments, snatched up a little straw hat, and set out on my adventures, in the same careless deshabille I had appeared the night before.

The moment I had got out of the view of my aunt's house, I was met by the Colonel, who received me with an extasy, that I believe was then sincere; we pursued our way to the harbour, where he had first seen me—On my not finding Nannette there, I endeavoured to quit him and go in pursuit of her, but he
held

held my hand, and entreated me to stay till he had revealed a secret to me, which was of the utmost consequence to us both.—He then assured me that Nannette was not my friend, and requested that I would not intrust her with the discovery he had made of his passion to me, for that he feared she would betray the secret to my aunt, and by that means deprive him of more than life, the happiness of seeing me; but that if I would be a little upon my guard, she might suppose his attachment to be nothing more than common galantry, which might, possibly, quiet the jealousy she seemed already to have conceived about it.

I was shocked at the idea of deceiving or suspecting my friend, yet the

gloom and dissatisfaction that appeared in her behaviour, the night before, made me too readily fall into this snare; nay, I joined in the deceit against myself, by entreating that he would be more attentive to her, and less particular to me, on the present interview. My motive for this request, I solemnly declare, was rather to prevent her being mortified, as I saw she had been before, than to remove any suspicion she might have entertained of me—For as I had perfectly acquiesced in the Colonel's honour and integrity, as well as my own innocence, I had not the least apprehension of any ill consequence, in such a compliance.—Thus did this artful man disjoin me from the only person who was likely to see through his designs, and could have an interest in preventing my ruin.

After

After this discourse, and abundance of protestations of the tenderest affection, we joined Nannette, and the Colonel left us for some time together, to try, as I presume, the strength of his power over me. — Nannette was all gayety, and shewed me abundance of presents that she had received from the Colonel. My heart reproached me for concealing its sentiments from her, but my promise to my lover had tied my tongue, and the weakness and vanity of her conduct left me less reason to regret the mortification she must feel, when she should know that he was seriously attached to me.

This evening passed away less pleasantly than the former—Nannette assumed a superiority over me, in sense and judgment; but attempted to soften her

self-sufficiency, by hinting at the difference of our years, and experience ; and though this salvo did not render her behaviour less disgusting, it deprived me of the power of resenting it, and I retired home convinced that there were two passions awakened in my mind, that I had never felt before, love, and hatred.

Nannette and the colonel accompanied me home—At parting, he put a little billet into my hand, which I could not refuse to accept, without letting her know that it had been offered. I was even then become the slave, the abject slave, of love, and feared to offend my future tyrant ! The billet contained nothing more than a repetition of passionate and tender expressions, with the warmest acknowledgments for the attention

tention I had shewn to his request, by the prudence and propriety of my conduct, and the most earnest entreaties to favour him with my company, the next evening.

I retired to bed, and I hoped to rest, but sleep was vanished, and with it the charming delirium that had kept me waking the foregoing night — Short was the road that I had travelled in the flowery path of pleasure, yet I already found it strewed with thorns! I trembled at the danger of treading it alone, and lamented more piously then, than ever, the loss of my dear mother, to whom I might have confided both my hopes and fears, upon this hazardous adventure.

The usual hour of my rising arrived, and found my eyes unclosed, and my thoughts unsettled; I had neither slept, nor determined on any scheme, for my future conduct; and when my maid came into my chamber, I stepped out of bed, burst into a passion of tears, and said softly to myself, I will not see the Colonel—at least, this day.

I considered this determination as an amazing effort of resolution, and fancied I had gained a complete victory over my infant passion. The anxiety of my mind, with loss of rest, had brought on a slight degree of fever; and the moment I quitted my aunt's chamber, I retired to my own, threw myself on the bed, and desired my maid to leave me.

The

The poor girl, who loved me tenderly, was alarmed at my situation, and ran directly to Nannette, to tell her I was ill, and to beg she would come to me—She told her she was at that time so particularly engaged, that it was impossible for her to stir abroad, but that she would certainly see me, some time in the evening.

I knew nothing of this transaction; and after having passed some hours in a disagreeable state of restlessness, the agitation of my mind subsided, and I fell asleep.—Some time after I was awaked by a light at my bed-side, and on opening my eyes I perceived Nannette, and Colonel Walter, disguised in womens cloaths, standing by me; the confusion which I felt, both from my situation,

and his, is not to be expressed—He gazed upon me, with such a look of ardent tenderness, as covered me with blushes. I turned my eyes away, begged they would withdraw into another room, and promised them that as soon as I had rendered my appearance decent, I would wait on them.

Nannette burst into a loud laugh, at what she called my affected delicacy ; said she supposed every body was sometimes undressed, and she did not see any occasion for making a difficulty about such trifles.—The boldness of her manner while she spoke, increased my distress, and completed the dislike I had began to have conceived for her—The Colonel appeared infinitely more modest, in his deportment, and on his making a sign
to

to her to leave the chamber, they both withdrew.

The hurry of spirits which this unexpected visit had occasioned, was increased by my apprehensions that some of the servants might detect the Colonel under his disguise; and though I knew they all loved and pitied me, yet I had been taught in my infancy, to dread the putting myself in the power of a servant, and never to let them know a circumstance which I wished should be kept secret.

The moment that I entered the room where my guests were, I entreated them to leave me, and mentioned my reasons for wishing them gone.—Nannette again made a jest of my scruples, but the Co-

lonel treated them more seriously, and asked my pardon for having brought me into any difficulty or distress, by his indiscretion, but pleaded both his, and Nannette's anxiety for my health; and insisted on my returning with them to the inn, since he was certain, from my appearance, that I had not any complaint to prevent me.—

But not to detain you, Madam, longer, with such tedious circumstances, I, half reluctantly, complied with his entreaties, and for about three weeks longer, we spent every evening together, almost in the same manner as the first.

I had by this time lost all affection and esteem for Nannette, and had now no confidante or friend, on earth, to whom
I could

I could disclose the secrets of my heart, but the single person in the world from whom I should most carefully have concealed them.

When he had become quite certain of his empire over my affections, he proposed my quitting Briançon, with him—he said my aunt was too old and perverse to be consulted, on such an occasion; that he neither wanted nor desired any treasure but myself, for that all other considerations were below his attention—he added, that his passion for me had detained him so long, at Briançon, that he was in danger of forfeiting his commission, and his honour; that if I loved him, I ought not to hesitate about putting myself under his protection; that our interests were now become one, and that he would

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defend

defend me from every misfortune, to the last moment of his life.—I believed, obeyed, and repented!

Here she paused—for this little reflection was followed by such a passion of tears, that I was obliged to restrain my curiosity, as you must your's, for some time—I administered drops and water to my fair biographer; and to you I recommend patience, till the next post; for my fingers are so tired, that it is as impossible for me to proceed, as it is to think, or write, upon any other subject, till I have finished this: therefore not one word shall I say of myself, but that I am well, that I long to hear from you, and that I am most affectionately your's,

L. BARTON.

L E T.

LETTER XXIX.

Lady BARTON to Miss CLEVELAND.

TAKE notice, my dear Fanny, that I am not used to narrative writing; you must, therefore, make allowances for me, and excuse my being sometimes too circumstantial, and at others, too diffuse.—I can only say that my translation is, what all others pretend to be, a faithful one.

Perhaps it is so much the worse, for that reason, for while I am endeavouring to convey the minutest circumstances to you, the elegance of expression which gave them consequence, in the original, is lost.—But no matter for the manner of recital—if the story interests and affects you as much in the reading, as it does
 to me

me in the writing, I shall be satisfied with my own performance.

As soon as the fair Olivia had regained her composure, she proceeded thus—Weak, young, and infatuated with passion, as I was, the Colonel's proposal of flying with him, without marriage, alarmed me, and awakened all the sentiments of delicacy, which are inherent to an innocent and virtuous mind; yet that very delicacy prevented my having resolution to express my thoughts upon that occasion—I feared to injure his honour, by seeming to doubt it.—I therefore remained, for some time, silent upon this most interesting subject—He repeated his entreaties, and pressed me to determine.

I replied, that I would consult my confessor. He had seen the various workings
of

of my mind, and was prepared to evade all my scruples—He objected instantly to my proposal, by urging that a priest would oppose my marrying an heretic, and endeavour to prevent it, by acquainting my aunt; but told me he had a particular friend, a clergyman, at Embrun, who would make no difficulty of uniting us together.—Thus did this artful man lull all my doubts to rest, and soothe my unwary mind into a perfect dependance upon his honour, fidelity, and love.

The night following was fixed for our departure, and in an evil and inauspicious hour, I ventured on a world unknown, with the most inhuman and ungenerous of his sex, for my conductor—I had perhaps as little to regret at leaving Briançon, as any young creature who ever
took

took so rash and unadvised a step—I wounded not the heart of a fond parent! nor drew a pitying tear from any friendly eye! I had no sister, on whom my disgrace might be reflected! nor a brother, whose tenderness might lament, or honour have resented my misconduct!—I stood, as it were, alone in the universe; was dear to no one, but the loved object under whose protection I now had placed myself, and in whom all the affections of my heart were centered!

Yet notwithstanding this very peculiar situation, my heart trembled, and my eyes overflowed, when I got into the chaise, and every league that we traveled, the dejection of my spirits increased—For some time the Colonel endeavoured to dissipate my melancholy, by the utmost

most tenderness, and I affected to appear more chearful, in compliment to his attention—but he soon roused my languor into resentment, by taking some unwarrantable liberties, which, when he found I would not suffer, he attempted to excuse, by saying that he had already considered me as his wife.

The moment we arrived at Embrun, he left me in the inn, to go, as he said, in pursuit of his friend, the clergyman—He returned, in about an hour, with a person to perform the ceremony; and we were married directly, but without any other witness; for I had thrown myself out of a situation to prescribe terms, and must therefore have compounded for having my own scruples satisfied, by a consciousness of my being his wife, leaving
the

the opinion of the world to its own charity about me.

We remained two days at Embrun, and then set out for Marseilles; during our long journey, my husband told me that he had some reasons for wishing to change his name; and that in compliment to my christian one he would be called Olivet.—I readily acquiesced in whatever he thought proper, without attempting to enquire into the motives of his conduct. We took a house at Marseilles, and lived for four months, in the utmost retirement, and the most perfect happiness together —— I never stirred out, but to church, or to take the air with my husband; every wish of my fond heart was accomplished, and I secretly rejoiced that he no longer talked of

of joining his regiment, or returning to his native country.

About that time his temper and manners began to alter; he was frequently sullen, and gloomy; and if I attempted to enquire into the cause of this change, he would answer, Thou art! and command me to leave him—I obeyed, and used to retire to my chamber, and pass whole days and nights, in tears.—But whenever he condescended to speak to me with cheerfulness, I instantly forgot his past unkindness, and vainly flattered myself that it would return no more.

At length, with some appearance of tenderness in his manner, he told me that he was under an absolute necessity of leaving me, for a few months, as my
situa-

situation would not admit of my travelling with him, from my being far advanced in my pregnancy of Olivia; but that he would certainly come back to me, by the time I should be recovered from my lying-in, and take me with him to Ireland, where his estate lay.

All that I had ever suffered in my life, seemed slight, to the misery of parting with him; I knelt, I wept, and implored him not to abandon me, under such circumstances! He was unmoved by my tears, and entreaties; and in a few days afterwards quitted Marseilles, without even bidding me adieu.—The grief I felt from this separation, would I hoped have terminated my life; and I fear I should have been tempted to have shortened the date of my wretched existence,

had

had not the tenderness which I felt even for my unborn babe, restrained my hand from the too frequent effects of despair. My situation was certainly deplorable, and I then thought that my misery could not admit of addition—I have been since but too strongly convinced that there are numberless gradations in wretchedness, and that I was then but entering on my novitiate.

I was so totally absorbed in sorrow at being forsaken by an husband, whom, notwithstanding his unkindness, I both respected and loved, that the common concerns of life never occurred to me, till my maid came to ask me for money, to support my family, which consisted of two maids, and a man servant. I started, as from a dream, and in an agony

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ny of grief ran to the Colonel's desk, where I found twenty louis d'ors, sealed up in a small box, labelled thus,

TO OLIVIA D'ALEMBERG.

“ THIS sum, if used with care, will
“ bring you through your lying-in ; but
“ you must immediately discharge two
“ of your servants.

J. WALTER.”

Here again the fair mourner's tears interrupted her recital, and must also put a stop to my translation, for the present. I wish extremely that I had finished the task I have undertaken ; for the sympathy between us is so strong, that I feel my health wasting as her tale proceeds. There is a story, that some unhappy woman had blasted a great oak-tree,

tree, once, by constantly mourning her griefs beneath its shade. This fable does not appear unnatural to me, under my present sensations.—And yet so sweet the poison is, that I would rather have listened to her doleful ditty, than to all the carols of the most festive mirth.

What can be the reason of so unnatural a preference? How oddly compounded is the human heart! But most admirably framed, surely! for what appears to the vulgar, to be its *contradictions*, are, in the language of philosophy, but its *contrasts* only. Its perfection consists in this, as much as the harmony of nature depends on an opposition of elements—The heat of fire, the coldness of water, the heaviness of earth, and the lightness of air.

You

You may observe that I take the advantage of every opportunity, for *reflection*, in order to guard my mind as much as possible, from the danger of *thinking*. I shall leave you to explain this paradox to yourself, and am, my dearest friend,

your truly affectionate,

but unhappy sister,

L. BARTON.

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LETTER XXX.

Lady BARTON to Miss CLEVELAND.

MY dear Fanny, I am now sitting down to conclude, I hope, the sufferings of my fair Narrator, which I shall endeavour to do without any further interruption; for though the listening to her story, had a great deal of what I deem *the luxury of woe* in it, I fear that this delicate sensation may have evaporated, from the frequent breaks in the recital, as much as the original spirit has, in my translation—but at all hazards, I will now proceed.

On perusing this shocking and surprising manuscript, continued Mrs. Wal-

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ter,

ter, my head turned round, and I had just presence of mind sufficient to convey it into my pocket, before I dropt upon the floor. The servants heard me fall, and came to my assistance. — Happy would it have been for me, if they had spared their cruel officiousness, and suffered me to have expired at that moment!

My distress and despondency, upon this occasion, may appear unaccountable, perhaps, to others. An husband's leaving his wife, sometimes, upon several occasions of business, was not so uncommon a case as to have alarmed me.—But there is a sort of præsentiment, in the mind, which often forebodes approaching ills; philosophy must here be at a stand. This circumstance cannot be accounted

counted for from nature, as the present situation may have no sensible connection with the future events ; nor can such an effect be imputed to Providence neither, without the impiety of supposing it capable of rendering us wretched, before our time, by giving us a hint of misfortunes to come, without supplying us with the means of avoiding them.

Besides, did not the address of his billet, the styling me by my own surname of d'Alembert, instead of Walter, or even that of d'Olivet, which he had artfully prevailed on me to assume, during our residence together at Marseilles, sufficiently evince that he no longer meant to consider me as his wife, for the future? This circumstance too, supplied me with a strong reason, also, to suspect

M 2

that

that in reality I had no legal title to that claim, as the unknown person who had so clandestinely performed the ceremony, might not probably have been properly qualified, by the orders of any church, to have officiated in the marriage rites.

It was, perhaps, no small aggravation to my misfortunes, to reflect, that had not my own indiscretion aided his dishonour, I should not now have been so totally abandoned, unjustified, unfriended, and unsustained, to the sport of fortune, to the mercy of a malignant, censorious, and unpitying world !

Some days after this event, I was lying on my bed, in a state of stupid distraction, when the sudden stopping of a chaise

chaife at my door, roused me from my lethargy—I leaped off the bed, and flew down stairs, crying out, he is returned, my life, my love, my husband!—But judge of my astonishment, madam, when I saw Nannette enter the door—Her face was thin, and pale, but she appeared farther advanced in her pregnancy, than I, and seemed, from the expression of her countenance, to be, at that instant, in the pangs of labour.

She accosted me with the grossest abuse, called me vile, deceitful wretch! said I had seduced her husband from her, that she was come to claim him, and to cover me with the infamy I deserved; alternately called for her dear Colonel Walter, and implored assistance to save her's, and her infant's life.

Amidst the variety of passions, which in those moments preyed upon my wretched heart, compassion was the strongest! I had her immediately conveyed to my chamber, and placed in my own bed; I sent for the best assistance that could be had, and in a few hours she was delivered of a son, who lived but three days. The agitations of her mind brought on a violent fever, but even in her ravings she continued to accuse me as the sole cause of all her sufferings, and uttered the most vehement imprecations against me.

From the moment of Nannette's arrival, I could perceive that my servants treated me with less respect than usual; they doubtless believed her story, and thought that my receiving her into my house,

house, was at once a proof both of my guilt and fear. — The physician and apothecary who attended her, divulged the tale abroad, and I was looked upon by the whole city of Marseilles, as one of the most abandoned wretches.

I know nothing that creates such an irksome sensation in the mind, as imputed guilt; but the very delicacy that makes us feel it most, serves to restrain us from entering into a vindication; as this would be to admit it possible, at least, it might be true. — Under such a difficulty I then laboured, and this nicety, supported by the natural courage of innocence, inclined me rather to acquiesce in the censure, than engage in so public a justification of myself, as this unhappy woman's charge against me seemed to re-

quire; and she was not herself, at that time, in a fit condition, either of mind or body, to have listened to my defence.

Nannette's delirium continued about fifteen days, during which time the miserable pittance that Colonel Walter had left me, was exhausted, and I was seized with the pains of labour, without being mistress of a single livre, or credit in the place. Death was, at that time, the supreme object of my wishes; yet in regard to my dear babe, that now approached the light, I sent for my confessor, related to him every circumstance that I have repeated to you, implored his protection for the unborn innocent, and put a shagreen case which contained the portraits of both my parents, with some jewels, into his hands, which had been bequeathed

bequeathed me by my dear mother, on her death bed, and which I had ever since preserved as a relic, with the most pure devotion.

Truth generally affords conviction to an ingenuous mind; the good father heard my story, believed it, pitied my distress, and gave me every consolation that my wretched state could admit of, by administering the rites of the church, and assuring me, in the most solemn manner, that he would take the utmost care of my child, in case it should survive its unhappy mother. I likewise recommended Nannette to his humanity—He promised that while she remained ill, all her wants should be supplied; and if she recovered, he would furnish her with the means of returning home again to her mother.

Peace once more took possession of my breast, and a thorough resignation to the will of Heaven triumphed for a while over that distracting inquietude, which had well nigh destroyed both my mind and body—But the arrow of incurable affliction was still lodged in my heart, and the temporary calm that I then enjoyed, was occasioned rather by my weakness than my strength.

It pleased Heaven that I was soon and safely delivered of my beloved Olivia; and from the moment of her birth, all selfish apprehensions vanished; I no longer felt a pang, but for her; and never ceased lamenting her being involved in the miseries of her mother! Though doating on her as I did, I a thousand times wished she had been born of any other parent!

and

and yet am certain I would not have parted with her to a queen.

In about ten days after I was brought to bed, the good father, who had supplied me with every necessary, and visited me constantly, came into my chamber, with an unusual vivacity in his looks—Be of good cheer, Madam, said he; Providence never forsakes the virtuous and patient sufferer—Heaven has been pleased, through my weak endeavours, to raise you up a friend, who is at once inclined and capable of relieving you from your distress, and establishing a certain supply for your future competence.—Madame de Fribourg will be here in a few minutes, and is coming to take you under her roof and protection; but, before it is possible for you to remove

M 6

there,

there; I will inform you how this instance of good fortune has been brought about, and furnish you with some instructions, that may conduce towards rendering you agreeable to your patroness.—But while he was yet speaking, the marchioness de Fribourg entered, and interrupted him.

I have already told you, that I had lodged Nannette, in my own chamber, and was of course obliged to lye-in, in my maid's room—The first words the Marchioness uttered, were, Heavens! what a place for the child of my friend! my dear madame d'Alembert! She stepped forward and embraced me, then raised her glass to her eye, and surveyed me with the most critical and distressing attention; I was so extremely confused, both by the suddenness and manner of her
entering

entering and address, that I could neither speak nor move.

From the death of that dear mother she mentioned, I had never seen a woman that was capable of inspiring me with respect, or awe, before—her appearance commanded both—A sudden gush of tears relieved me for a moment, and seemed to soften the *farouche* demeanour of my future benefactress.—She quickly made an apology for having mentioned my mother, seated herself by me, laid aside her glass, and took my hand with infinite grace, but no softness.

The marchioness was about fifty years old, she was uncommonly tall, had been remarkably handsome, her eyes large, black, and piercing; but the whole contour

tour of her countenance was rather hard than pleasing—there was an air of *fiercé* expressed throughout her whole appearance, that inclined you, at first sight, rather to fear than love her.

She told me, that my confessor, who was also her's, had informed her of my distress, but that chance had brought her acquainted with my being the daughter of her friend; that, as such, I might depend on her good offices, and regard: and added, that she hoped I should be ready to set out with her, in a few days, for Paris, where she was then going; and that she would order her woman to provide a proper nurse to leave my child with.

The idea of parting with my daughter, shocked me extremely—I fell at her feet,
and

and as if she had been the arbitress of my fate, implored her not to divide me from my child! said that this infant was now the only blessing I possessed in life, and that nothing but death, or her happiness, should ever part us.

She gazed at me with a mixture of surprise and contempt, and said, that if Pere Guillaume had informed her I was such a pretty simpleton; she would have saved me and herself the trouble of a visit; but that she believed there was something contagious in folly, since she found herself inclined to comply with my absurd request, though she detested children; but that her hotel at Paris being large enough to prevent her hearing it squall, I might bring the brat with me, provided I did not insist on her being plagued with it, during our journey.

I was

I was transported with even this uncouth and forced permission; I kissed her hand, and bathed it with my tears; told her she had rendered me extremely happy, and that I would endeavour to deserve her indulgence, by every mark of gratitude and attention in my power. She seemed pleased, and somewhat affected; and at quitting me, she gave me a purse of fifty Louis-d'ors, bid me prepare for my journey, by that day sen-night; said she would not desire me to come to her house, at Marseilles, because she meant to surprise her husband, by finding me in her suite, without his knowlege, and desired that I might still retain the name of d' Olivet.

This was the most sudden transition I had ever experienced, from sorrow to joy;

joy; and tho' I could not possibly know what sort of state I was going to enter into, yet I thought any change must be for the better.—It was also the first time I had ever had any thing like business to transact in my life; and the having it in my power to discharge my debts and servants, composed my mind into a state of the most pleasing tranquility imaginable.—Nannette, however, remained still a weight upon my spirits, in addition to that misfortune that then did, and ever will oppress them.

In a short time after the marchioness had left me, the good father Guillaume returned; he brought with him the shagreen case, which I had intrusted him with, the contents untouched, except a diamond ring which he had been obliged to dispose

dispose of, to answer the expences of my family; and delivered me twelve Louis d'ors, the remainder of thirty he had sold it for.—The sight of my dear parent's pictures affected me extremely; I kissed and bathed them with my tears, and most piously thanked my good patroness in my heart, for this article of her bounty, more than all the rest, that she had saved me from the misery of parting with those dear remains.

Father Guillaume told me that he had related my story to madame de Fribourg, without mentioning who I was, and shewed her the jewels, in hopes that she would purchase them, which she refused; but the moment she beheld the portraits, she snatched up one of them, exclaiming with surprize and joy, this, this is—was—
my

my near relation, and my dearest friend, Olivia d'Alembert! upon which he acquainted her with my name and family; and she promised on the instant to take care of me, but insisted on his not informing me that she had acknowledged any manner of affinity between us.

He then gave me the marchioness's character and history, in a few words.—Pride, vanity, an insatiable desire of admiration, and a fondness for play, he said, were her great foibles; but that she was friendly, generous, and humane, when these virtues did not interfere with her passions—He said she had been married young to the marquis de Fribourg, that he had been dead about ten years, and had left her immensely rich; that she had since married monsieur de Lovaine,

a young

a young soldier of fortune, who treated her very cavalierly, and of whom she was extravagantly fond and jealous—He told me that he had furnished me with this little *charte du païs*, in hopes I should be able to steer my course by it, to safety and happiness.

He then informed me that he had written to a friend of his, in Ireland, to inquire after Colonel Walter; but that, as I had not been able to ascertain even the name of the province where his fortune lay, it was possible, nay probable, from the dissoluteness of his character, that I might never see or hear of him again.—He intreated me, therefore, to strive wholly to forget him, and devote my whole attention to the cultivation of the marchioness's friendship, and the education

education of my child—He promised to remember me in his prayers, and to favour me with his advice by letter ; then took a most affectionate leave of me, as he was obliged to quit Marseilles, for a few days, to perform some business, by command of his superior.

I had not seen Nannette from the time of my being taken ill ; but as I knew she was recovering, though slowly, I fancied I was then able to bear an interview with her, and acquaint her with my design of quitting Marseilles : I meant to offer her every assistance in my power, and take leave of her, I hoped, for life.

I accordingly proceeded to her chamber—but no words can express the surprise and horror that affected me, at seeing

ing her—Her whole frame was convulsed, and every feature distorted and enlarged. The moment she beheld me, she seemed to acquire new strength, and endeavoured to revile me with as much bitterness, as when she arrived first at Marseilles.

She had, however, no longer the power of raising any passion in me, but pity—I said every thing that was possible to calm her mind; assured her I had never knowingly injured her; and that I had certainly been as much, if not more, imposed on and deceived, by Colonel Walter, than herself.

I then proceeded to relate, with the utmost exactness, the Colonel's whole behaviour, from his first meeting, to his
4 quitting

quitting me, during the recital of which, she wept often; her countenance became more placid and composed; and, when I had finished my story, she asked my pardon, a thousand times, for the injury she had done me, and confessed I was much more to be pitied than herself, on account of my youth and inexperience.

She confessed too, that the formalities of marriage had never passed between them; but shewed me a paper he had given her, by which he had engaged to acknowledge her as his wife, at some future æra. And with regard to the marked attention which he had shewn to me, he assured her he meant nothing more by it, than merely to deceive her mother—and in order to carry on the plot, said he was obliged to spend a few weeks at
Embrun,

Embrun, upon a particular business, and desired her to hold herself in readiness to come off to him there, at a minute's warning, on a summons which he promised to send her from thence.

Matters being thus settled between them, her mind, she said, was quite at ease on his departure—till she heard of my elopement with him, the morning after it happened; which threw her into a state of distraction, for several months; but not hearing from him, all that time, and beginning, at last, to apprehend that her situation would quickly discover her misconduct, and cover her with infamy, she determined to follow him to Embrun; and as she could not suppose that he had ventured to have entered into firmer engagements with me, than he had already

done with her, she considered herself as having a prior right to the title of his wife, and resolved to assert her claim.

She then took a small sum of money from her mother, to whom, at length, she had revealed the secret, and came off post to Embrun, as it had been known that we had taken that route; but upon missing us there, she had with almost incredible difficulty, and after numberless delays, attended by illness and fatigue on the way, traced us to Marseilles, where she acknowledged that she owed her life to my unmerited humanity—she then poured forth many severe execrations against Colonel Walter, said she would not return to Briançon, but, if she should recover, would pursue him all over the world, till she had received satisfaction,

at least in revenge, for his perjured faith and villainy.

She told me that my aunt had not expressed either rage or surprise at my going off, but seemed rather to be sufficiently consoled for my loss, by being freed from the expence of my future maintenance.—There is a material difference between the belief, and certainty of a fact—and though I had hitherto supposed that her insensibility might have prevented her from grieving at the impropriety of my conduct, or the misfortunes which might probably attend it, I could not bear to be convinced of my own insignificance, by her inhumanity—I felt humbled and mortified, at this account, as if I had received some fresh injury.

Before

Before I knew any thing of Madame de Fribourg, I had many times thought of returning to Briançon, of throwing myself at my only surviving parent's feet, and of endeavouring to obtain her pardon, for my offending self, and her protection for my unoffending child.—But now the idea vanished like a dream, and I thought of no other resource, but the marchioness's kindness.

After having discharged all my little debts, I had about thirteen Louis-d'ors left, and the day before I quitted Marseilles, I took leave of Nannette, and presented her with ten of them; I begged to hear from her, and left a line recommending her to the care of the good Father Guillaume, and we parted from each

other with all the tokens and feelings of revived friendship.

When the Marchioness's equipage stopped at my door, I was ready to step into it, and my little girl was consigned to the care of her woman, who travelled in a chaise behind us—Madame de Fribourg accosted me with great good-humour, and praised my exactness, in not keeping her waiting. The instant I opened my lips to reply to her politeness, Monsieur de Lovain lifted up his eye-lids, which had been closed before, and seemed to awake from a profound slumber; he gazed at me with an expression of surprise in his look, and threw me into as much confusion as his lady had done on our first interview.

From

From that moment he became lively, and so perfectly polite, and attentive to the Marchioness, that not only she, but I was charmed with his behaviour, and our long journey was rendered perfectly agreeable by the pleasing concord that appeared between, as I then thought, this happy pair.

On our arrival at Paris, the marchioness allotted me an apartment, in her hotel, and ordered two of her women to attend particularly on me, and my child; she requested that I would get the better of my *air triste*, and appointed a music-master and a dancing-master to instruct and fashion me.

L E T.

LETTER XXXI.

Lady BARTON to Miss CLEVELAND.

Southfield.

AS I have now happily set the fair narrator down safe, at the hotel de Fribourg, you will give us both leave to rest ourselves, a little; for though I am still, you perceive, running on, yet I find that a change of subjects relieves the fatigue of writing.

While she was relating her story, I felt infinitely more than you can possibly do in reading it; the seeing the very object of distress before us, is a vast improvement to the pathetic; besides that along with my compassion towards her, and my resentment against her husband, there was mixed up a certain sensation of hor-

ror

ror at being lodged under the roof of such a villain.

I honour Shakespeare, for asking by the mouth of Lear, "Can there be any cause in nature for these hard hearts?" And am charmed with Sadi, the great Indian philosopher, for saying that *Il ne faut qu'un soupir de l'innocence opprimée, pour remeuer le monde*. The extravagance of the eastern manner of expression cannot hurt the nobleness of the sentiment.

We have heard nothing from any of the party since they left us, nor have we been encumbered with neighbourly visits, since our return home — But our weather is fair, our woods are dry, our hearth and hearts are warm, and Harriet, Lucy, and I, find sufficient society

in ourselves, to shorten the day and lengthen the evening, being too loth to part at night.

The next post I shall resume my narrative, which may serve to divert us both from too close an attention to our own unhappiness—Till then,

Adieu,

7 DE 64 L. BARTON.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

